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## PARADOXES OF CAPITALISM

SOME STARTLING REVELATIONS.

### A Definition.

A paradox, as the writer understands it, is the relation of two or more dissimilar phenomena, which, taken by themselves and without a knowledge of the connecting links necessary for the elucidation of their relativity, apparently contradict each other in the absurdest fashion. When, however, the chain of reasoning between such phenomena is complete, it will be seen that the absurdity, although still existing, is what may be called a "logical absurdity," that the contradiction is the inevitable outcome logically deduced from the original premise from which the phenomena in question spring.

Capitalist society abounds in paradoxes, which, to a mind unacquainted with the basis and workings of our modern industrial system, must appear monstrous in their insane and perverse effect both on the individual and on society as a whole.

### Riches and Poverty.

Under capitalism wealth is produced in practically unlimited quantities, and yet the great majority of people live and die on the verge of starvation, sometimes slightly above the poverty line, more often below it, but always approximating, in any case, to the bare subsistence level. Direst poverty prevails in the midst of vast plenitude; food and clothing are produced to excess, yet thousands of hungry and underfed men, women, and children are never able to obtain a satisfactory meal or a sufficiency of covering. There is more than enough housing accommodation to shelter everyone quite adequately, yet in numerous cases families of four, six, and even more, persons are compelled to live in one small, badly-ventilated and cheerless room.

Let us take another paradox of capitalism.

### A Concrete Illustration.

A few years ago in Northampton—which, of course, is the centre of the boot industry—many children were walking about unshod because their fathers had produced more boots than the market required and were therefore obliged to "stand off" until some channel could be found through which the surplus stocks could pass and be absorbed. Being unemployed, the bootmakers of Northampton received no wages and were therefore without the necessary means of purchasing the boots urgently required by their children, although all the time the warehouses in their town were full to repletion of the articles wanted.

The above is a glaring instance of the way in which "over-production" means unemployment and privation, but the same thing is constantly occurring, either directly or indirectly, in every part of the world. The harder a man works the sooner is he out of a job. He is debarred from obtaining the commodities necessary for the well-being of himself and his dependents because he has produced more such commodities than his employer can sell.

### Idleness and Industry.

Yet another paradox of capitalism is the spectacle of the idle rich and the industrious poor—what a picture of incongruity the words "idle rich" and "industrious poor" conjure up!

The men and women who do the work of the world, without whose efforts human life on this planet would cease to function, are the poorest, economically, physically, and mentally, while on the other hand the people who do nothing useful or necessary, who indeed are the drones living on the honey produced by the workers, are the people to whom all the good things of life accrue. The wonders of nature, of art and

science and literature, are open to the latter people—the members of the capitalist class—whereas all the workers can look forward to is a life of hard and generally sordid work, their reward for which is just a sufficiency of food, clothing, and shelter necessary to enable them to exist and to breed and rear a progeny, who in their turn will supply the place of their parents when the latter are considered by their masters unfit for anything but the industrial scrap-heap.

#### The Socialist, for his part—

To any man or woman who can escape from the orthodox point of view and survey the composition of present-day society with impartial eyes, the workings of capitalism must appear bewildering in their contradictions and absurdities. The Socialist, for his part, possessing an understanding of the fundamental factors underlying such phenomena, will see the inevitableness contained therein and will pour scorn and contempt on a system which begets results best compared to the fantastic visions of a diseased brain. He will analyse and adversely criticise every manifestation of such a system. He will point out that while you have the means of wealth production held by a comparatively small number of people; while the industrious majority are kept in a condition of slavery by an idle minority; while the whole of the wealth that is produced becomes the immediate property, not of those who produce it, but of those who have nothing at all to do with its actual production: in a word, while capitalism lasts, poverty in the midst of plenty, and all the other tragic absurdities that are now commonplace, must by the logical sequence of events, continue and multiply.

There are two factors in capitalism, one useful, one injurious, to the welfare of the people as a whole. The useful factor is social production; the injurious factor is the private (the unsocial) ownership of the means of production and distribution.

#### The Task.

It is the Socialist's task, that is, the task of those who desire society to be placed on a physically and mentally healthy plane, to advocate a system wherein the means of production and distribution shall be socially owned and controlled. Wealth at the present time is only produced by the will of, and for the benefit of, the few who own the instruments whereby it is produced, and is naturally therefore, the sole property of those few. When the whole of the people have obtained control of the instruments of wealth production, of course, the wealth then produced will be the property of the whole of the people.

Nothing could be simpler or more logical. Yet such is the mental outlook of the majority of the members of the working class, so greatly are they saturated with capitalist teaching and ethics, that the fallacious arguments in favour of the present system still find ready adherents, while the nobler and healthier advocacy of the Socialist position obtains little hearing and small support.

As, however, capitalism develops and the paradoxes such as have been mentioned become more glaring and more ridiculous, as, moreover, the Socialist view-point continues to reach the understanding of the people, our assurance is that the members of our class—the working class—will organise with us for the purpose of hastening the downfall of capitalism and of establishing in its stead the system of Socialism, the ramifications and workings of which, admittedly, are as yet but dimly perceived, even by those who have devoted almost a lifelong study to the subject, but which the youngest Socialist amongst us knows bears within it potentialities of life undreamt of in the insane and sordid system under the auspices of which we now live—or rather vegetate. F. J. W.F.B.

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## CAPITALISM'S DILEMMA.

ENGLAND AND THE NEW ERA, by Brougham Villiers. T. Fisher Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Villiers' work, "England and the New Era," is so well written and arranged that the subject—with most writers dry and tedious—is made quite interesting and in places even instructive. He assumes that there must inevitably be a new era, because the forces operating within the present order unless consciously controlled will bring disaster and chaos on human society.

According to him, every nation in the old world, with the exception of England, is so weighed down with debt that they are virtually bankrupt, and will be compelled to repudiate their debts. "England," he says, "may readily find herself alone in the new era, the only nation in the whole world bearing a crushing burden of debt, competing with nations which have virtually gone through the bankruptcy court and come out with free hands." From this we discover quite early that his conception of a "new era" is not different from the old order in its fundamentals.

In his introductory remarks Mr. Villiers lays much stress on the aspirations of small nations to establish their independence. He says: "Sinn Fein is no isolated phenomenon: It is only the Irish manifestation of a universal spirit." He fails to show, however, that the realisation of their ambitions will modify in any way the general character of the capitalist system. The capitalists of each country, large and small, will still compete for the world's markets, and amalgamate into opposing groups in the same way that they did in 1914. While the workers can be blinded with the ashes of Imperialism or the dust of Nationalism, it is plain that they have yet to learn that they are both built on their slavery.

Mr. Villiers' second disruptive force is the Labour movement throughout the world. He says: "There are, of course, vast differences in form between its manifestations in various countries and in the same country at various times, but in Germany and France, in Great Britain and in Russia, among the most moderate 'collectivists' and the most extreme revolutionaries, there is an essential unity of idea, a common conception of a new order utterly different from that which is falling to pieces around us. It is here, as will be seen later on, that the hope of the world will be found; here, if anywhere, is the foundation from which a new order can arise." (Page 52.) In none of the countries mentioned by Mr.

Villiers, nor in those he has not mentioned, is the Labour movement revolutionary. While there may be revolutionaries in every land, the Labour movement everywhere is merely reformist. The reforms advocated may be different in the different countries; that they are reforms is their "essential unity of idea," and their "vast differences in form" amount to little or nothing because none of the forms are based on Socialism, but only seek to modify the existing order of society.

Mr. Villiers is, of course, unable to show from the manifestoes or programmes of the Labour Party in this country that it is revolutionary, so he gives a brief sketch of the movement in which he says "The terms 'masters and men' had given way to 'employers and employees' even before 1911, an indication in itself of the coming spirit. Just as villeinage could no longer be maintained once the villeins felt it to be an indignity; if the working classes no longer wish to be employees producing goods for anyone's profit, such a change in the point of view must in the long run be equally fundamental." (Page 59)

All of which is extremely consoling to those capitalists who fear that Bolshevism is the beginning of the end. While capitalists generally will be quite willing that the workers should call themselves by any name they choose so long as they leave them surplus value. But the mere wishing for a better system by the workers, or a rooted objection to produce for the profit of others, will not get them a better system, even "in the long run."

A still more hopeful sign for Mr. Villiers is the revolt of the rank and file of the trade unions against their leaders. If this action were the result of their growing knowledge it would indeed be a hopeful sign; but as Mr. Villiers himself points out, many of the strikes are of a "frivolous nature." As the workers understand their position more clearly it is safe to say that their actions on the industrial field will be based on common sense, instead of becoming wild or frivolous.

The Trade Union and Co operative movements and their growth in recent years are also indications to Mr. Villiers of the approaching revolution, although the rank and file of these movements are still engrossed with the idea of obtaining paltry advances of wages, or a few coppers in the pound discount on the wages they spend at the stores—facts that in themselves reflect the ever-growing poverty of the workers.

But the greatest advance of all, according to our author, is the propaganda of "Guild Socialism." He claims that "this has greatly

enriched, if not the philosophy of Socialism, at least the stock of ideas current among British Socialists." One of these enriching ideas is quoted by him from a Fabian pamphlet on "Guild Socialism" by Mr. G. D. H. Cole as follows:

"There is no hope in Bureaucratic society. Nor any hope or chance of capitalism lasting much longer. That puts it up to you either to accept what I am saying or else find some means by which you can induce men to go on producing, other than the fear of hunger. Hunger has made men work in the past, but it is everywhere breaking down to-day. Either men won't go on working at all, or else they will go on working for some quite different reason." (Page 61-2.)

All of which is just as vague and indefinite as Mr. Villiers' indications of a coming revolution. Though he thinks it is all true, and that "capitalism will work no longer for labour is refusing to work it." Of course wild statements of this kind cannot be substantiated by facts. Everywhere the unemployed are demanding that they shall be put to work, and already there are signs that competition for jobs is resulting in speeding up and reductions in wages. Many industries are working short time, but it is against the wishes of the operatives, who would much prefer to work overtime. In their eyes a week's wages is the essential thing, and they must make capitalism work to get it.

In his concluding chapter called "Creative Revolution" Mr. Villiers tries to show that the Labour Movement is revolutionary and that its adherents are increasing enormously. He does not tell us, however, that these numbers are made up by including the members of affiliated trade unions, co-operative societies, etc., the bulk of whom have never even tried to understand what the Labour Movement stands for. True they are nearly all more or less discontented and would listen and understand Socialism if it were intelligently presented to them. But the Labour Party and I.L.P. merely advocate reforms that lead nowhere, except that they serve capitalist interests by concentrating the workers' minds on the patching up of the present system, instead of making clear to them the necessity of ending it.

The greater portion of Mr. Villiers' book is taken up with the indebtedness of capitalist governments and the means by which the debt can be reduced or cancelled. On page 84 he presents three main ways of dealing with it.

"1—To shirk it as much as possible, merely manipulating the taxes from time to

time, so as to provide as long as possible for the payment of interest and perhaps for reducing the principle.

"2—To repudiate it altogether or in part.

"3—To devise some great scheme for its repayment either immediately or over a term of years."

With regard to repudiation Mr. Villiers has examined all the arguments except one, and that one, of course, is the most important.

Those who hold the bulk of the war bonds control the political machine. The Cabinet represents their interests, and neither our author nor anyone else will ever succeed in persuading them that it is only justice for them to forego their interests when so many thousands of the workers gave their lives to make the country safe for them.

Heroic measures like repudiation form no part of capitalist policy. Not only so, other wars are expected, and who would lend if the present debt is repudiated? Moreover, war bonds are a source of income which their holders have no wish to relinquish. The first policy is therefore the most likely to remain.

The third policy, repayment, it is suggested should be by a capital levy. His chief idea is that the stocks and shares now held by capitalists should be transferred proportionately, according to the holdings, to the Government, which would then have an income from which to pay the debt. But if that were all the capitalists might just as well keep their shares and pay themselves with the dividends. They would at least save the expenses of collection and distribution.

The capitalist class and the capitalist government are one in interests and outlook. The debt is owed by the capitalist class as a whole to some of its members. It is the collective responsibility of the capitalist class, and the assets of that class are the means of wealth production, which, operated by the working class, produces the revenue enjoyed by the capitalist class. That revenue will be neither more nor less because some of the shares, or all of them, are held by the Government. If the capitalist class, therefore, adopt Mr. Villiers' suggestion, they would merely be giving up to their executive government annual dividends to be handed back to them as repayment of the executive debt.

Of course Mr. Villiers does not expect the capitalist class to be guilty of perpetrating such a delusion on themselves, but he does think they will allow the Labour Party to do so, or that the Labour Party will accomplish it, they having adopted it as part of their programme.

Debts or no debts, the workers under capita-

lism can never get more than wages based on the cost of subsistence; the debt is, therefore, a capitalist debt, must be paid by the capitalist class if paid at all, and is their concern and their concern only.

But what of the Labour Party? While claiming to be revolutionary it spends its time inventing and advocating schemes to relieve the capitalist class of their indebtedness, to get them out of a tight corner and establish their system on a surer foundation than ever.

If they were really revolutionary they would laugh at the "dilemma of capitalism," and explain to the workers how they can escape from their dilemma—wage slavery—by establishing a system of society where the means of wealth production are owned in common and democratically controlled. Until they do this the Labour Party, instead of being "the hope of the world," are a stumbling block preventing the workers' acquisition of Socialist knowledge. Instilling hope by its sentimental clap-trap, it spreads confusion and breeds apathy in the minds of the workers.

Mr. Villiers dreams of revolution and repayment of war debts at the same time; but they contradict each other. The one is to overthrow capitalism and the other is to make it solvent. He cannot have it both ways. Either revolution and the abolition of class-ownership in the means of life, and consequently the abolition of interest on war bonds and dividends, and the workers continue to be exploited as hitherto. His failure to deal satisfactorily with his subject is chiefly due to the fact that he does not realise what is meant by revolution and cannot conceive the possibility of a system not based on capital and ownership of capital with all that it implies.

F. F.

## DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE

"Dignity and Impudence" is the title of a well known print portraying two dogs peering from one kennel. One represents a St. Bernard, with heavy jaws and ponderous paws, shaggy mane, and eyes watchful and easy. Calm and powerful there he rests, while between his paws reclines a terrier, sporting in the shadow of the other's strength.

There is something common to both, however, and it lies in the fact that they each depend upon their owner for the means to sustain life.

Now there is an analogy between this picture and the life of mankind in modern capitalist society. Let us, therefore, take a brief survey of the economic conditions of human existence.

In the first place we know that the world is

inhabited by many millions of people, with a variety of tastes, habits, and so on. Further, out of this number there is an overwhelming proportion who have something in common. It is that they are compelled to work in order to live.

The capitalist system of wealth production has stretched out its tentacles over the whole world, so that almost everywhere we find these teeming, struggling millions, who not only have to work, but are compelled to work for someone else.

Unless the units of this vast army of workers can find work—someone to employ them—they are cut off from the means of life and must starve, as thousands are doing to-day.

So this vast mass of the world's workers, like the dogs in the picture, have this common character—they are dependent upon someone else. They are dependent upon someone who will employ them, in order to get the common necessities of life.

These "someones," these employers, who are they? Clearly they occupy an entirely different position from that of the workers. They are the ruling class, the possessing class, the idle class. They have no useful function in society, but live a life of luxury and ease upon the fruits of the labours of the working class—they are parasites on the body politic.

These are the two classes into which society is divided. Let us now examine a particular section of the working class, that section who usually refer to themselves as "brain workers," but are often referred to as the "black coat brigade," in order to complete our analogy with "Dignity and Impudence."

This particular section is made up of types who are dignified and respectable, because they come into close daily contact with their employers. It is their specific function to assist the capitalist class in the direction of keeping their accounts, in order to show exactly how the exploitation of their fellow workers is progressing. The docile humility and faithfulness which distinguishes this particular type of slave seems now to be developing into something like impudence.

The writer has in mind the strike recently called by the Guild of Insurance Officials, because certain of its members were dismissed from the General Accident Corporation for being members of the Guild. The management of the G.A.C. having noted the impudence of this action, record their strong resentment in a letter to one of the dismissed. I quote the "Daily Express," 17.11.20:

"... Moreover, did you for one moment think that any board of directors would

agree to the setting up of a joint committee of employees and themselves to consider the merits or demerits of the various members of the staff and their remuneration? Such a thing in a commercial business that is run by brains is absolutely impossible."

One can easily appreciate that it would seriously disturb the atmosphere of dignity in which employers of brain workers have always endeavoured to cloak their slaves, to permit them to organise themselves like common workmen—or like common masters for that matter, for they all do it—for the protection and furtherance of their economic interests.

Economic forces are no respecters of persons. They grind slowly but surely, compelling even the most stiff-necked to forgo their dignity and examine their conditions of daily life. Therefore it only proves the correctness of the Marxian method when the super-respectable find it necessary to organise for the defence of their economic interests.

In connection with the strike a joint mass meeting was held "to protest against the dismissal by the General Accident of employees who have joined the Insurance Guild, and to vindicate the right of brain workers to combine for mutual protection." Associated with the demonstration were the following organisations:

Shipping Clerical Staffs' Guild  
Stock Exchange Clerks' Guild  
Commercial Staffs' Association  
National Guild of Accountants' Clerks  
Scottish Bankers' Association  
Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries

Railway Clerk's Association  
Clerical Officers' Association (Civil Service)  
Representatives of these organisations addressed the meeting, and each endeavoured to outshine the others in their rhetoric.

The black coats, however, must bear in mind that they are, comparatively, newcomers in the trade union movement, and that if progress is to be made the rank and file must get acquainted with the motive force which has compelled them to organise; they must get to understand their class position and the nature of the class struggle which Socialist knowledge makes clear.

When this has been attained, the function of the trade union leader, whose record in other fields is marked by treachery, will be realised.

Leadership implies an ignorant following. An intelligent rank and file require democratically elected delegates to represent them. This is a distinction of fundamental importance to the workers, if they are to achieve their emancipation from wage slavery.

When resolutions were moved by the leaders at this meeting that Mr. Lloyd George should be asked to intervene, and if he was not respectable enough, then the Prince of Wales should be acquainted with the facts, the fitness of these men to "lead" their followers anywhere save into "outer darkness" is utterly disproved. Political parties represent class interests. Mr. Lloyd George represents the interests of the capitalist class, whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the working class. The Prince of Wales is an estimable young man who knows his job, which is to eyewash the workers in the interest of the capitalist class.

One speaker, however, determined to maintain his dignity at all costs, said "We view the strike method with abhorrence." Of course, "on strike" does not sound a bit respectable, but the strike is the only weapon the workers have on the economic field. The black coats may get more familiar with it in the near future, when the contempt that will be bred of familiarity will doubtless compel them to look for other methods.

Those other methods are class-conscious political action. And the Socialist Party, with its political object, awaits eagerly that time of understanding.

The action of the "General Accident" was not altogether appreciated, however, by the employing class, because, as the "Daily News" put it in an editorial (19.11.20): "This is the way to drive the brain workers and manual workers closer together, and both of them towards extremes. Is it worth while?"

This observation on the part of the capitalist Press is particularly significant, and there is a wealth of meaning and fear hidden in that last sentence, "Is it worth while?"

After all the pains which the ruling class have taken to impress a certain section of the working class with the respectability of their black coats and the dignity of their calling, and to isolate them from the "lower orders," they have to recognise that their policy of divide and rule is nearly played out.

To salary slaves the lesson should be clear. They must understand that whether they have to work in black coats or overalls they belong to the working class. When they grip this fact they will know the worth of the high-sounding phrases about respectability, gentility, dignity, and the rest of the flattering notions with which their masters keep them in subjection.

The working class are compelled to grovel on the floor of the industrial kennel, and if some of their number assume dignity they are but taking on a pose which ill fits the degrading nature of their existence. Their remuneration, whether it is called wages or salary, is deter-

mined by what it costs to keep and reproduce their kind. Like carrots and cat's meat, their energies are bought and sold, and the wage or salary is the price. It may sound undignified, but, nevertheless, it is an economic fact which has to be firmly gripped.

Finally, organisation on trade union lines, no matter how well disciplined the rank and file may be, and necessary as it may be to-day, in order to resist the pressure of the employing class, will not emancipate the workers from the wages system. To achieve this end they must organise into a political party conscious of their class interest, and equipped with the necessary knowledge.

That political party already exists—in the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Study its Object and Declaration of Principles, and then—ACT! B.

### THE ONLY WAY.

A deputation of a few London mayors headed a procession of unemployed to Downing Street, with the object of interviewing the Welsh wizard, to whom they look to solve the unemployed problem.

Somehow, the futility of it did not penetrate the skulls of even the mayors! If Lloyd George or the Cabinet were to solve the question, there would be no further need for either him or his fellow agents.

Workers, you must realise that unemployment is a necessary prop to the capitalist system; therefore to abolish the evil of "out of work" it is necessary to overthrow the cause of its existence—it cannot be done otherwise.

The members of the Socialist Party know the futility of processions, demonstrations, and other such means the workers employ. They also know that the political power which the working class give the master class by their votes, enables the latter to confront the former with armed force, and until the control of that armed force is wrested from the capitalists the unemployed and the working class as a whole might as well try punching a brick wall.

The only way in which the emancipation of the working class can be achieved is by studying the Socialist position, organising class-consciously *inside* the Socialist Party with the object of overthrowing the capitalist system. There is NO other way, and it cannot too often be re-iterated.

Don't waste time running your heads against police batons: the cost of repairing a cracked skull would be sufficient to purchase all the literature necessary for your enlightenment.

W. A. G.

### HAVE WE?

Our attention has been drawn to a book review which was published by our contemporary "The Communist" under date 9.12.20. The book reviewed was "Communism and Christianity," by Bishop William Montgomery Brown, D.D., published by the Bradford-Brown Educational Co., Ohio. "The Communist" says that the author, "in the course of his farewell, explains his point of view in the following very definite terms:—

"The contradiction in terms known as the Christian Socialist is inevitably antagonistic to working-class interests and the waging of the class struggle. His object is the conciliation of classes,—not the end of classes. His avowed object indeed is to purge the Socialist movement of its materialism and the means to purge it of its Socialism and to direct it from its material aims to the fruitless chasing of spiritual will o'-the-isps."

It is a funny thing, but if the reader will turn to page 21 of our pamphlet "Socialism and Religion" he will there find the following passage:

"... But the contradiction in terms known as the Christian Socialist is inevitably antagonistic to working-class interests and the waging of the class struggle. His policy is the conciliation of classes, the fraternity of robber and robbed, not the end of classes. His avowed object, indeed, is usually to purge the Socialist movement of its materialism and this, as we have seen, means to purge it of its Socialism, and to divert it from its material aims to the fruitless chasing of spiritual Will o'-the-wisps."

Except for some obvious printer's errors in the first the difference between the two isn't great, is it? In fact they are near enough alike to reveal their connection and to establish the need for some acknowledgment on the part of the ex-bishop of the source of the passage. He may, of course, have made such acknowledgment, or he may have palmed it off as the fruit of some brain wave of his own—not having seen the book we do not know; and, by gosh! we do not care.

But it would be interesting to know whether our brochure has really converted a bishop from the benighted purveyor of spookism into a real dispenser of light and learning. He might do worse than send us a copy of his book for review, in which case our publishing department might be prevailed upon to return him the 3d. he paid for our brochure, "Socialism and Religion"—if he paid for it.—(Ed. Com.)

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**The Socialist Standard,**

SATURDAY



JAN. 1, 1921.

**THE MASTERS' NEW OFFENSIVE.**

It is symptomatic of the pressure which the gradual awakening of the workers is putting on the master class that the latter is adopting a policy of systematic anti-Socialist propaganda and education in political economy among the workers. For generations the capitalists have been content to leave the doping of their slaves to the parson, the novelist, and the prostitute of the Press, all of whom worked by the general distortion of the vision, and generally left economics alone. But to-day we find all and sundry among capitalist agents developing into professors of social science for the benefit of the working class, and, more significant than all the rest put together, the great capitalists are making it a personal matter, and, probably counting upon the glamour of their names to cover the weakness of their arguments, have essayed to teach the workers the kind of economics they would like them to know.

The late Andrew Carnegie was a notable case in point; later Lord Leverhulme addresses working class audiences all over the country, and tries to tell the proletarians "What is Capital" in a ludicrous pamphlet of that title, and so we could go on.

Well, we welcome these pamphleteers and platform pounders with open arms. If you pitch a roped ring and put one human fighting cock in it no one takes much notice; but directly you put a second man in the ring the town flocks to see. We have been the lonely figure in the ring years enough—is it possible that at last our enemy is coming out to fight?

A few days ago the editorial in the "Daily Chronicle" tried to show the workers that low production means high prices, high prices mean smaller purchasing power, smaller purchasing power means lessened demand, which completes the circle with increased unemployment—a plausible enough tale if one forgets that, in spite of all arguments, and regardless of high prices or low, it is the surplus-value, the difference between what the workers are paid (and therefore are able to consume) and what they produce, that causes unemployment, a fundamental fact that the capitalist sophists have never been able to dispose of and never will.

In "Lloyd's Sunday News" of Jan. 9, 1921, the Right Hon. C. A. McCurdy, K.C., M.P., Food Controller, tries to do his little bit toward the general bamboozling of the workers in an article entitled: "Your Food Prices in 1921." He strikes the right note at the commencement when he says "The people of Great Britain, I think, deserve some word of recognition, if not of thanks, for the progress which has been made in this country towards restoration of commercial prosperity."

"Commercial prosperity," mark you, in the face of a million hungry unemployed! One would have thought this touched the limit, but the of the same paper, in the same issue, goes one better. "Our money is going to be worth more this year than last, and it is going to be easier to make ends meet," he says. It is pretty evident that the writer of that optimistic passage is not unduly oppressed by the flood of unemployment which, even his own leaders recognise, is about to sweep down upon the working class of this country.

Mr. McCurdy, of course, takes up the old cry beloved of capitalist papers, capitalist statesmen, and those capitalist henchmen, the labour leaders (who are strangely quiet upon the point now that the inevitable result we prophesied has been arrived at). He declares: "The price the British housewife will be called upon to pay in 1921 for many commodities will depend in part, of course, upon the continued progress of our own people in increasing production..." A little later he says: "Europe wants the goods, we want the wages; why is it, then, that an exchange cannot be made which would be so profitable to both? The answer is that the war..." has also dislocated and choked the rivers and channels through which international trade flowed freely in time of peace."

With channels and rivers dislocated and choked the way to avoid floods is not to clear the channels, but to pray Gord to increase the output of rain!

We hope to have an article shortly dealing at length with this subject.

**WHAT THE WORKERS DO UNDERSTAND.**

The average working man obviously does not understand two vital factors of the system of society prevailing to-day. His conversation proclaims this; his replies, in debating on economic and political matters, prove this beyond dispute. Adamantine facts daily stare him in the face, yet he does not perceive them.

The two all-important realities he is unaware of are: (1) The slave-condition of the working class the world over, and (2) the way the wages system robs them of the greater part of the wealth they produce.

Let us deal with things as we find them. We will consider the first of the above statements.

The working class constitute the vast majority of the community. They

**MUST WORK**

to provide themselves and their dependents with the means necessary to sustain life. The only alternatives are existing on charity, stealing, or starving.

They are propertyless—they own no land nor any means by which wealth can be made by the application of their socially-useful labour-power. The only thing they do own is their labour-power—the ability, strength, and faculties to work. That labour-power has a value, for it has the magic quality of producing wealth when usefully exercised.

The capitalist class, owning all the natural sources of wealth and the means and instruments for its production, are thus intensely powerful through that ownership, and through their appropriation of the wealth as it is daily produced by those who toil for them.

The capitalists are an idle class. The workers' labour-power they make use of for themselves, and appropriate the fruits of labour for one purpose only—their own enrichment. Thus the sole function of the workers under the present system is to

**PRODUCE PROFIT**

for the capitalist class.

From the time when they "go out to work" till the time when they can no longer toil they must continue to function as mere producers of capitalist wealth. They may change masters; they may suffer want and misery through enforced unemployment and consequent poverty; but they will always have to sell their labour-power (whenever and wherever they can) to a capitalist in order to exist at all. It is impossible, in practically every case, to get away from that dire necessity. It is impossible to avoid their dependence on being employed by

some member of the capitalist class. The latter own the very means of life; they control the conditions of getting a livelihood; the whole economic and political power exerted by them secures their position and maintains their privileged status. As a class they completely control the lives of the indispensable working class the world over. Thus working-class will and desires are completely subjected to capitalist-class will, interest and dominance.

What else is this but the

**SLAVERY OF THE WORKERS?**

You have to-day, on one hand, aristocratic and plutocratic dominance and privilege, combined with idleness and exploitation, class-rule and social inequality. On the other hand you have a huge class of toilers who are propertyless and exploited wage slaves who produce the wealth of the world and yet are robbed of the greater part of it in order that their masters may realise a profit out of it.

Now, secondly, it is observable that the average worker does not see how he, or his class, are robbed by capitalist exploitation through the wages system.

"Robbed! How robbed?" he will say when told of the fact. "I get my wages. I suppose the employer is entitled to make his bit out of it! How am I robbed?"

Possibly he recalls many kinds of robbery. Brigandage, piracy, burglary, and Dick Turpinism suggest themselves to him. There is no parallel that can be cited he thinks to prove the contention. Well, let us consider wealth-production from its very basis.

A worker tries for a job at a firm. He is willing to sell his labour-power—his skill and strength—to be used in the production of wealth by applying it to nature-given material. The employer agrees to purchase that labour-power for a given period under specified conditions, and for a stipulated sum—termed "wages."

Ascertained facts prove that, on the average, the worker is paid no more for his services than is barely sufficient to reproduce his labour power daily.

This labour power has cost certain necessities to produce in the first instance. It has been developed; it must be sustained in a given degree of efficiency. But, in spite of this, the human machine will and does

**WEAR OUT**

just as the one of iron and steel does, and when no longer useful it will have to be replaced.

So not only is an amount of necessities required to maintain him, but an added amount is imperative to bring up children to serve in his stead as wage-workers, and who, in their

turn, will perpetuate the supply of labour power.

Labour power is really a commodity—bought and sold in the labour market like margarine, and with as little sentiment.

The value of every commodity is determined by the average quantity of labour required under the general conditions prevailing at any given time to produce it. Thus the value, in the form of wages, that is paid to the worker for his labour-power, represents the value of the necessities needed for its reproduction, and therefore is determined by the amount of labour required for that purpose.

Being engaged to work for a stipulated wage the worker has also to labour for an agreed number of hours per day or per week, and under certain other restrictions. He thus sells his labour-power for the whole of that time. In fact, the employer has bought it all for that period.

All the wealth the worker produces in that time is appropriated by the employer, and every means is used to extract the

#### UTMOST VALUE

from the worker in the period during which he has sold his labour-power.

When the capitalist buys the worker's labour-power he buys it for one special purpose—to get out of the toiler a greater total value than is represented by the worker's wages. If the worker did not produce this surplus value, the capitalist would make nothing by employing him, and would therefore have no inducement to do so.

This value produced by the worker in excess of that contained in his wages, this surplus value as we call it, is value for which the capitalist pays nothing whatever.

The worker thinks he has been paid for his labour. He has not: he has only been repaid the value of his labour-power. He has been paid what his labour-power cost to produce; but the value which that labour-power produces—a far greater quantity—belongs to the capitalist. This increase, this surplus-value, which the exploiter pays nothing for, represents the

#### ROBBERY OF THE WORKER.

Thus the robbery of the worker is veiled by the wages system. The paid and the unpaid portions of the labour are indistinguishable, and the worker appears to have been paid for the whole.

This process of exchange between capitalists and labourers, resulting in a systematic robbery of the working class, simply continues to keep the workers a wage-slave class in a chronic state of poverty, and tends just as surely to enrich the idle capitalists, who exploit them.

We have seen from the first portion of the article that the working class are enslaved under capitalism; we see that labour alone of human factors produces social wealth, but that the greater part of the fruits of the workers' labour is stolen from them.

The only hope of the toilers, the only remedy for all the disastrous results of the slavery of their class, lies in Socialism. While the pernicious capitalist system continues their poverty and misery also will continue.

When the workers understand the real operations and effects of the wages-system, and their own class slavery, they will see that no reforms

#### OR PALLIATIVES

can effect their emancipation.

When they understand Marxian economics and Socialism they will realise that only by their own class-conscious efforts will they free themselves and establish a new and sane social system.

Educated in these things, and organised on the industrial and political fields, they will seize political power and wield it and its forces for the paramount purpose—the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth.

GRAHAM MAY.

#### NOTICE TO LITERARY FLEDGLINGS.

The Editorial Committee will be glad to receive for publication brightly written Branch Reports. No report should exceed fourteen and a half pages of the "S.S.," for the simple reason that we do not wish to encroach upon the back page or to leave out the title of our organ, and we rather favour the idea of completing the report in one issue.

#### CONCERNING THAT FUND.

Old Moneybags, the Party Treasurer, declares that the Party Publicity Agent will have to be hanged if that Thousand Pounds is not raised this year. Well, so he ought to be. Will all who are tired of sitting on the family chest with a revolver and bombs, to discourage thieves, please send their money along for us to look after. Think what a shock it would be to any decent burglar when he flashed his dark lantern on your door to find our Acknowledgment List nailed thereon, and underscored the announcement—"Comrade Nosumthink, his last brass farthing!"

#### "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

## THE OUTLINE OF HISTORY BY H. G. WELLS.

### A CRITICISM.

Mr. Wells misses completely the transition of society in Greece and Rome from the tribal or kinship form to the political or territorial and class form of organisation. The striking social achievements associated with the names of Draco, Solon, and Cleisthenes are, for instance, passed over in silence. This is a serious omission and one that is difficult to explain. How Mr. Wells can sum up Athenian history without even mentioning the so-called "reforms of Solon" passes comprehension. The student who seeks information as to the social revolution from the tribal to the political phase as it occurred in the concrete both in Attica and in Rome cannot do better than consult Morgan's "Ancient Society" or the "Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" by Engels. These works may be supplemented by that instructive but less scientific account—"The City-State of the Greeks and Romans," by W. Warde Fowler.

Mr. Wells' history of Rome contains some of the finest work in the whole book, much of it showing real historical penetration. The following except from his account of the later years of the Roman Republic is typical of the best passages:

The rich grew richer and the poor poorer. It was impossible to stifle the consequences of that process for ever by political trickery. The Italian people were still unenfranchised. Two extreme democratic leaders, Saturninus and Glaucia, were assassinated, but that familiar senatorial remedy failed to assuage the populace on this occasion. . . . In 91 B.C. Livius Drusus, a recently elected tribune of the people, . . . was assassinated. He had proposed a general enfranchisement of the Italians, and he had foreshadowed not only another land law, but a general abolition of debts. Yet for all this vigour on the part of the senatorial usurers, landgrabbers and forestallers, the hungry and the anxious were still insurgent. The murder of Drusus was the last drop in the popular cup; Italy blazed into a desperate insurrection. (Chap. XXVIII. S. 3.)

In the next chapter the author treats of the Empire, of its miseries, corruptions, and debaucheries, and gives the real reason for the easy success of the "barbarian invaders" against the one-time "impregnable."

It is manifest that to the bulk of its inhabitants the Roman Empire did not seem a thing worth fighting for. To the slaves and common people the barbarian probably seemed to promise more freedom and less indignity than the pompous rule of the imperial official and grinding employment by the rich. The looting and burning of palaces and an occasional massacre did not shock the folk of

the Roman underworld as it shocked the wealthy and cultured people to whom we owe such accounts as we have of the breaking down of the imperial system. Great numbers of slaves and of the common people probably joined the barbarians, who knew little of racial or patriotic prejudices and were open-handed to any promising recruit. No doubt in many cases the population found that the barbarian was a worse infliction even than the tax-gatherer and the slave-driver. But that discovery came too late for resistance or the restoration of the old order. (Chap. XXIX., s. 2.)

Mr. Wells lays great stress, and rightly so, upon the fact that settled, cultured, and prosperous communities are apt to be overrun by warlike, nomadic peoples. The process and its effects are well described by Prof. Myres in his "Dawn of History." The conquerors first subdue and plunder the conquered but are eventually absorbed in or by them and their culture. This process, as Mr. Wells puts it, "in a thousand variations has been one of the main stories in history for the last seventy centuries or more." But the recognition of this fact leads the author to amazing conclusions. In his chapter on the "Renaissance of Western Civilization" he introduces to our notice his third type of community, which turns out to be a compound of or hybrid between his first two.

Essentially this modern state, as we see it growing under our eyes to-day, is a tentative combination of two apparently contradictory ideas, the idea of a community of faith and obedience, such as the earliest civilizations undoubtedly were, and the idea of a community of will, such as were the primitive political groupings of the Nordic and Hunnish peoples. For thousands of years the settled civilized peoples, . . . seem to have developed their ideas and habits along the line of worship and personal subject on, and the nomadic peoples theirs along the line of personal self-reliance and self assertion. . . . It was only after thousands of years of cyclic changes between refreshment by nomadic conquest, civilization, decadence, and fresh conquest that the present process of a mutual blending of 'civilized' and 'free' tendencies into a new type of community, that now demands our attention and which is the substance of contemporary history, began. (Chap. XXXV s. 1.)

Now for the result of this "blending."

. . . constantly recurring nomadic injections have seedily altered the primordial civilization both in blood and spirit; . . . the world religion of to-day, and what we now call democracy, the boldness of modern scientific enquiry, and a universal restlessness are due to this "nomadization" of civilization. The old civilization created tradition, and lived by tradition. To-day the power of tradition is destroyed. The body of our state is civilization still, but its spirit is the spirit of the nomadic world. It is the spirit of the great plains and the high seas. (Chap. XLI. s. 4.)

Surely no more fantastic theory as an explanation of modern society and its mental reflex was ever conceived. To show all its absurd

implications would take more space than we can spare on such ridiculous nonsense. The confusion of Mr. Wells is shown by the way he brackets as effects of a common cause the "world religions," all of which are over a thousand years old, with modern scientific "enquiry" and "democracy," the achievements so to speak of the day before yesterday. The old civilization did not create tradition. Tradition as a social force existed ten thousand years before any civilisation was dreamt of. It is in fact more potent by far among barbaric peoples than in any form of civilization. The old civilization used tradition and modified it for class purposes. It is so used to day, and is far from being "destroyed."

If Mr. Wells can find no adequate explanation other than the above of the modern developments he mentions we can provide him with one. The economic conditions of the primitive civilizations preserved in a modified form, and in fact were built upon, the old-established institutions of the patriarchal stage—the village community and the guilds—the very embodiments of tradition. Such indeed is the condition to-day in China and India, and such was largely the case in the manorial system of mediæval Europe.

But economic developments undermined the manorial system. Commerce and money payment freed the serf, destroyed the "village" and put in its place the free peasant and the capitalist farmer, produced eventually the propertyless wage working class on the one hand and the capitalist "manufacturer" on the other. Then the machine revolution in industry and transport brought us to the fully fledged capitalist system of to-day. These broadly were the factors, real concrete factors, not the Wellian myth of "Nomadization," which smashed the fetters of feudal tradition and created modern science and "democracy." As a matter of fact in other parts of his book Mr. Wells to a certain extent actually shows the part which these economic developments played in bringing about the above ideological effects. Throughout the book the narrative of history is very much superior to the author's generalizations about it.

There have been no incursions of nomadic invaders into Western Europe for well over a thousand years. Would Mr. Wells then have us believe that this "spirit of Nomadism" has persisted through hereditary transmission and in an adverse environment during all these centuries and has actually increased beyond measure in the past hundred years!

Mr. Wells's account of the French Revolution

makes good dramatic reading, here and there getting down to realities, but for the most part it is superficial. He gives a sympathetic account of the Jacobins and a fairly rational account of the "Terror." He is particularly to be commended upon his repudiation of the malicious lies with which most "historians" have slandered the fine personality of Marat. But nowhere does he tell us that the paramount factor which determined the nature, course and outcome of the revolution was the class interests of the bourgeoisie. The present writer strongly recommends to the student what is easily the best recent and popular contribution to this subject—"The French Revolution," by H. Packwood Adams, a book with a viewpoint almost Marxist. In it we read—"the only clear and ruthless purpose existed in the brains of the middle class. . . . The removal of seigniorial oppressions and of administrative chaos were a necessary part of the economic plans of the men of commerce; . . . the main advantage of the Revolution went to those long-headed capitalists whose destiny it has since been to make the nineteenth-century Europe the factory of the world, and indirectly and unwillingly forge what may well become the iron cradle of a more gigantic democracy than the world has known. These people knew what they wanted and got what they wanted, but the getting was harder than they knew." (P. 27-27.)

Those who have read that remarkable little book "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," will remember how Marx states in his opening paragraphs that all great historic personages occur twice—once as tragedy and once as farce—and that when men are engaged in revolutionising things and themselves they conjure up the spirits of the past, assume their names and costumes to enact a new historic scene in a time-honoured disguise and with borrowed language.

No better illustration of Marx's generalisation could be forthcoming than that Mr. Wells gives when dealing with Napoleon Bonaparte.

His coronation was the most extraordinary revival of stale history it is possible to imagine; Caesar was no longer the model; Napoleon was playing now at being Charlemagne. . . . the Pope had been brought from Rome to perform the ceremony; and at the climax Napoleon I. seized the crown, waved the Pope aside, and crowned himself. The attentive reader of this Outline will know that a thousand years before this would have had considerable significance; in 1804 it was just a ridiculous scene. In 1806 Napoleon revived another venerable antiquity, and, following still the footsteps of Charlemagne, crowned himself with the iron crown of Lombardy. (Chap. XXXIII. s. 4.)

Mr. Wells gives two useful quotations from

## A LOOK ROUND.

On the same day that the papers described the wholesale occupation of public buildings by the starving workless, there was also announced what will probably be accepted as the satisfaction—relatively speaking—of the postal workers with their conditions of service; that is to say, the result of a ballot was published in which the members of the Union of Post Office Workers had been asked to express their feelings on the question of the adoption of a strike policy. This involved the setting up of a strike fund, but also carried with it the proviso that no strike should be resorted to without consulting the membership by means of a ballot.

Ballot papers to the number of 107,049 were issued; with the result that 48,157 voted for a strike policy; 35,411 voted against; and 23,481 refrained from voting. This result was acclaimed by their General Secretary, (J. W. Bowen) as a decisive victory for the forces of progress! To the present writer the impression conveyed is that they are simply in the cart. This is proved by the analysis, which shows that so uncertain is their knowledge that nearly one-third of the membership voted against, whilst almost a fourth refrained from voting. And then for one of their officials (Mr. Ammon) to go and say that another official of the N.U.R. had referred to postal unions as having made greater strides during the past ten years than any other trade union, and as being the most advanced politically, is sublimely ridiculous.

It is a well known fact that postal servants generally are amongst the most reactionary of organised workers, being very old-fashioned in their views. It cannot be said, therefore, that very many of the thousands who did or did not participate in the ballot were actuated by any conviction resulting from an analysis of their position as wage slaves.

\* \* \*

Colonel Amery, as Under Secretary for the Colonies, has received the congratulations of the House for his economic handling of the situation in Somaliland, he having disposed of the "enemy" at the trifling cost of about £100,000. A "gratifying" feature of his report was the confidence expressed that within a reasonable number of years Somaliland will pay the cost of its administration. The economy has been effected by the use of the aeroplane, a method, Major General Seeley states, which is far more preferable than the old-fashioned way of advancing small bodies of infantry "to extend British influence." He considers the use of aeroplanes cheaper, more effective, and more

Napoleon's writings on the political use of religion: "How can you have order in a State without religion? Society cannot exist without inequality of fortunes, which cannot endure apart from religion. When one man is dying of hunger near another who is ill of surfeit, he cannot resign himself to this difference, unless there is an authority which declares—'God wills it thus: there must be rich and poor in the world; but hereafter and during all eternity the division of things will take place differently.'" "It is my wish to re-establish the institution for foreign missions; for the religious missionaries may be very useful to me in Asia, Africa, and America, as I shall make them reconnoitre all the lands they visit. The sanctity of their dress will not only protect them, but serve to conceal their political and commercial investigations." (*Ibid.*, s. 3.)

Napoleon, like all intelligent rulers and politicians, knew the value of superstition as an instrument of class subjection, but few of his kind have stated it so clearly. For this very reason, as Mr. Wells points out, he had opposed religion as a freethinker when he was a youthful revolutionary Jacobin.

R. W. HOUSLEY.

TO BE CONTINUED.

[We regret to state that in our previous instalment of the above criticism a paragraph was omitted by the printer. We give below the missing paragraph, which should have followed the third line, second column, p. 58.

In a primitive community the individual has little importance as such. He may almost be said to belong to it body and soul, and apart from it he has neither rights nor responsibilities. Such a system is unfavourable to the development of enterprise or private initiative, but at the same time it encourages the habits of obedience, discipline and common action, upon which further social progress depends. The absorbing claims of the community are well illustrated by the primitive laws of property, according to which everything of the greatest value belongs to the clan in common. (P. 25.)

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

THE PRACTICE AND THEORY OF BOLSHEVISM, by Bertram Russell. Allen & Unwin. 6s.

THE SOCIALIST ILLUSION, by Bernard Taylor. Allen & Unwin. Paper, 1s. 3d.

LIFE OF ROBERT OWEN, by himself. Bohn's Social Economic Series. G. Bell & Sons. 2s. 4d.

LIFE AND STRUGGLES OF WILLIAM LOVETT, by himself. Bohn's Social Economic Series. Two vols., 2s. 4d. each.

humane than any other method. Its effectiveness is not in doubt, as the people of Amritsar and of Mesopotamia can testify, but as to its being humane, that is open to question.

Capitalist ethics, however, do not stand in the way when "extending British influence," or that of any other nationality, whether against white workers or merely "niggers." The use of aeroplanes as a method of settling disputes is coming more and more into favour, and the adoption of this "humane" method as a cure for industrial unrest can be looked forward to with certainty.

By the way, it is interesting to note that it has been established beyond doubt that the first bombs dropped on any town were dropped by the British on Cologne and Dusseldorf. This represents the initiation of this form of "extending British influence." (See "Manchester Guardian," Nov. 1, 1920.)

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At one stage of the present war when the fighting was on a larger scale and men died at the rate of some thousands a day, it was usual to describe them as having been "killed in action." Now that one phase has shifted round to Ireland, it is the fashion of certain newspapers to speak of those killed in the fighting on the Government side as having been "murdered," in spite of the fact that the country is under martial law and the army held to be on active service. It is as if Spain, for political reasons had protested in 1914 that the British and French were murdering Germans. All bluff, of course.

\* \* \*

In the appeal made to the British people this Christmastide for help toward relieving the women and children of the late "enemy" countries, it was stated that "the whole truth about the appalling sufferings of the famine-stricken little ones is so dreadful that no newspaper would publish it." I can quite believe they wouldn't; and it is quite easily understood—by those who care to understand—why they wouldn't. It isn't out of any regard for our feelings. The very same Press which will now print an appeal (like an advert.—to other people) without disclosing too much formerly printed miles and miles of rubbish and lies when it suited their purpose to do so, in order to make men go out and bring about the conditions they now deplore (perhaps). Men have suffered imprisonment and degradation of all sorts for saying that these conditions would be the result. Only a short time ago men were acclaimed as heroes who succeeded in their allotted task of making orphans. Now the men

of peace step forward out of their five years of lethargy, pull a long face and implore us in the lowly Jesus of Nazareth, to save the little ones.

The swine! As if ours were the responsibility! One has only to pick up any newspaper to read of the millions that have been squandered on the very machinery responsible for the conditions referred to.

\* \* \*

The same people used to teach us that charity began at home. Meanwhile—

On December 11th the Wigan borough magistrates committed a poor widow, aged 75, to prison for three months for stealing a piece of celery value 4d from a stall in the market. (News item.)

TOM SALA.

### THE IRONY OF IT.

"It is a strange irony"—so concludes an editorial in the "Daily News" of 13.11.20, under the title of "The Two Paths," wherein is described the ceremonial which took place on the day following the anniversary of the armistice. The writer, playing upon the emotions, remarks:

"The kings and chaplains and prelates had departed, the pomp and ceremonial ended, and then the people, not only those of London, but from all parts of these islands, drawn as naturally as men lost in a desert, came quietly together and made Whitehall the beating heart of England."

We are not unmindful of the untold suffering and misery which has been inflicted upon the working class of the world as a result of the Great European War. Millions of working-class lives were sacrificed; shattered constitutions and wrecked hopes are the lot of many thousands of victims who have survived King Capital's carnage. And the class responsible for all this misery—the ruling class of the world—still are the principle figures in the drama of life; and the working class, doped, dazed, bewildered, still gaze on the players with reverence and awe—a satisfied audience whose emotions are carried along on the tide of a stupifying misconception of life. The working-class conception of life consists of work and wages. These two things fill their horizon and colour all things else. Their inevitable reward is insecurity of livelihood, poverty and toil. It is for a condition of life like this that the workers have made their sacrifices and given their best to further the interests of King Capital.

One of the greatest tragedians on the social stage—David Lloyd George—on the occasion

of one of the numerous rehearsals which are periodically held throughout the land—the Lord Mayor's banquet at the Guildhall—said in an optimistic speech: "The workmen are three fourths of the population and the future of the country depends upon their common sense and their patriotism." ("Daily News," 10.11.20.)

There you see the actor setting the scenery for another drama which will shortly be acted—The General Election. They are rehearsing; they are advertising. They will organise a mammoth campaign. Coalitionists, Liberals, and Labourites will come before you, each blackguarding the other, each representing different sectional interests of the capitalist class. They will cajole, flatter, and trick you into going to the great show. They are prepared to spend millions of pounds in this direction, though thousands may be destitute and starving. They depend upon the common sense and patriotism of three-fourths of the people—the working class.

The term "common sense" is a vague phrase typical of the foggy nature of most of the utterances of men like Lloyd George, who, we call to mind, coined those mystic phrases, "A land fit for heroes to live in"; "Let there be sunlight in the workman's cottage"; "The land shall be a field of waving corn." They reflect the depth of working-class political ignorance and apathy.

"Patriotism" is something more concrete. It is the love of one's country. The country belongs to the master class. Those who own the earth own those who live upon the earth. It should be clear, therefore, you dignified, politically ignorant three-fourths of the population, that you are nothing more than wage slaves—you cannot well be less.

It is a strange irony, therefore, that while you are marching with your grief to Whitehall there should be another army of marchers, as the editorial above referred to points out, the great army of unemployed—men and women denied the opportunity to live, compelled to see those dependent upon them reduced to hunger, reduced even to starvation.

The "Daily News" editorial finishes with heart-tearing sighs and veiled regrets. Hypocritical, maudling, sentimental pathos is contained in those words—"It is a strange irony," because the "Daily News" serves as one of the daily programmes of King Capital's drama, figuring the scenes which tell of the misery and sufferings of the workers—that three-fourths of the population upon whose votes so much depends.

How much depends? Why, the very existence of the capitalist as a ruling class.

The picture drawn above should be clear.

The capitalist Press of the entire world is the servant of the capitalist class. Its members know what is behind the scenes, and their function in life is to provide the limelight, the music, and the curtain.

I will conclude with the remark that it is a strange irony that a small minority—the ruling or capitalist class—should retain their privileged position in modern society while "three-fourths of the population" should be compelled as a consequence to live miserable lives, struggling for the mere necessities of existence. Truly it is a strange irony that the working class, by whose labours, applied to the raw materials of mother earth, all wealth is produced, who fight the sectional battles of the ruling class, should be so politically ignorant that they give all power to their enemies when at election times they record their votes in favour of the class who are the cause of all the economic evils mankind is suffering throughout the capitalist world to-day.

Fellow Workers, arise from the depths of your dumb despair. Arise and avenge yourselves for the untold suffering which for so long has been your lot. Rid yourselves of the horrors and nightmares of capitalism. The world and all its fruits stand ready for you to take—are you worthy to enjoy them? If you are you will be with us, helping to organise your class in the Socialist Party, in order that the present social system may give place to the Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth.

Do not run away with the idea that you cannot help, that your weight will not count, that your efforts do not matter. To those who think thus there is a special meaning in Clough's splendid lines:

"Say not the struggle nought availeth,  
The labour and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.  
If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars:  
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
And but for YOU possess the field."

So if you agree that our principles and policy are correct, do your obvious duty and join us.

O. C. I.

### ATTENTION, PLEASE!

Will members of the Party and sympathisers living in and around the Fulham District communicate with Frank Mortlock, 540 Fulham Road, Walham Green, S.W.6., with a view to establishing a branch of the Socialist Party in that district?

## SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.

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Parliament Hill Fields, 11 a.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

## Mondays:

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m. Garrett Lane, 8 p.m.

## Thursdays:

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.  
Battersea, Mossbury Rd., Lavender Hill, 8 p.m.

## Fridays:

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

## Saturdays:

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 6 p.m.

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN

## OBJECT.

The establishment of a new society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments of production and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## Declaration of Principles

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, FEB., 1921.

[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE

## RURAL POVERTY.

THE SITUATION REVIEWED.

Just Ask for What You Want.

Under the heading: "How to Overcome Poverty in Rural Districts," the "Daily Herald" for Saturday, the 18th December, reports a meeting of a Trades Council at Halesworth in Suffolk, at which agricultural workers' representatives supported a resolution requesting an immediate increase in wages. The reason for this request is clear enough. The agricultural workers of Halesworth find that the cost of living continues to increase, and it becomes more and more difficult to live on the wages they get; they therefore ask that the Agricultural Wages Board, a body set up under the Corn Production Act, shall order an increase of the minimum wage at present applicable in Suffolk. So far so good, but the supporters of the resolution do not explain why they expect the Board to order this increase, nor what they propose to do should they refuse. Apparently no explanation is considered necessary.

It might be said that the Corn Production Act was intended to "secure for able bodied men wages which, in the opinion of the Board, are adequate to promote efficiency, and to enable any man in an ordinary case to maintain himself and his family in accordance with such a standard of comfort as may be reasonable in relation to the nature of his occupation."

Who are to Decide the Standard?

That is true, but it is as well to remember that the problem of deciding what is a decent standard was not to be left to the workers themselves to decide. It will be useful here to consider the conditions which necessitated the Corn Production Act, and the motives of its promoters, and to return later to the particular problem of the Suffolk workers.

The capitalist or employing class lives by exploiting the workers; this means that out of

the whole product of their labour the workers receive only a part, and not a large part. Speaking generally, they get sufficient to enable them to work and to bring children into the world who will carry on when they are worn out—just like horses, with the one great difference that a horse costs money and must be fed and tended even when temporarily not required to work, while men cost nothing and can be stood off when work is slack, because their employer is under no obligation to keep them, and knows that they can be replaced at any time. In any industry, therefore, the employers are primarily interested in the exploitation of their own employees. Their interests are served by having production as high, and wages as low, as possible, even to the extent of injuring the health of the workers. An individual employer does not have to consider the health and fitness of future generations, and in consequence physical deterioration has been the lot of the workers in every land under the present system of society.

**The Beggars MUST Protect Against Themselves.**

However, the more far-sighted capitalists and their agents realise the necessity of protecting their workers against the too ruthless exploitation in order to preserve the future of the industry, in particular that they can effectively resist the attacks of other countries in time of war.

The rivalry which exists between national groups of capitalists necessarily becomes so acute as to lead to open war. Workers are then called upon to defend the interests of their masters, and if it is desired to have sufficient factory hands it is doubly necessary to have fit and capable soldiers to stand the shocks of modern warfare. It is for this reason that

Factory Acts and the statutory limitation of hours and other restrictive measures are introduced, often in face of the bitter opposition of sections of employers who will suffer immediate loss, or who fail to appreciate the need for them. The minimum wage clause of the Corn Production Act was intended to give the agricultural labourer the same amount of protection as had already been granted to town workers.

#### Why the Act was passed.

The Act itself owed its origin to the famine that threatened the Allies, and this country in particular, in the early years of the war. An acute shortage of shipping, aggravated by the haphazard attacks of the German raiders, and later by the sustained submarine war, had been required to teach our rulers that a larger proportion of our food supply could and must be produced at home. They decided that farmers had to be induced to plough up grass land and in this and other ways to increase considerably their corn acreage, and as corn-growing had been declining for many years owing to the cheapness of imported corn, the inducement took the form of guaranteeing prices at a high level for a number of years. It was, of course, out of the question to compel farmers to assist in smashing Germany without reward; that was reserved for mere propertyless workers.

#### Capitalists "Getting Wise."

The experiences of war had taught our militarists and the Government's agricultural advisers one or two other things as well. The medical examinations had revealed a startlingly low level of fitness among rural workers. Little and poor food, bad housing, and heavy work at too early an age, had had a disastrous effect on a once virile country population. What could not be done for the workers' own benefit had to be done in a hurry when it was a question of "food for the guns" in our masters' war.

Besides this the more wide awake of the agriculturists had made another discovery: that it does not pay to employ unhealthy and under-sized workers. Experiments in Hampshire showed that the agricultural workers had sunk to so low a level there that higher wages and piece rates would not lead to greater production. Generations of under-feeding and bad housing had robbed labourers of the Southern counties of the vitality required to enable them to respond to these forms of inducement so successful elsewhere.

Just think how distressed Thomas and Clynes and other pro-capitalist Labour leaders must have felt at the idea of workers who couldn't increase their output and their employers' profits!

So it was done! The Corn Production Act says that the agricultural worker must have a decent standard of life.

What was meant, of course, was that just enough should be given to make it possible to get more profits and better soldiers. Poor Sir Frederick Benbury, gallant old Tory that he is, had a horrible nightmare when he thought this innovation might give the land workers leisure to think, and to be extravagant. "What is necessary," he declared, is that you should have your labourers content with their position and have their minds intent upon their work," and "I know for a fact . . . there were men doing casual work who earned from their point of view quite enough in four days to enable them to do nothing for the remaining two days."

#### No Need for Uneasiness.

But he need not have worried. The minimum fixed upon was 25s., which has since been increased with rising prices to 46s.!

The Government were soon satisfied that sufficient had been done to meet future military requirements. When Lloyd George, with the assistance of some millions of soldiers, and at the cost of a million workers' lives, had won the war, they recovered from their first panic. They were also satisfied that the agricultural unions, whose rapid growth they had foreseen and desired, could be trusted to see that at least the most hideous features of rural degradation were to some extent removed. As a matter of fact agricultural wages have increased by a greater percentage than those in most industries since pre-war days.

Now that the object of the Act has been considered there comes the question of the working of the machinery it set up to deal with wages. There is in every county a committee composed of equal numbers of representatives of farmers and workers together with some neutral members. These committees are advisory only, and a central board sitting in London alone has the power to make orders, against the wishes of the district committees if necessary.

#### The Real Object of the Scheme.

These Halesworth workers, like many others, appear to think that their representatives merely have to ask for an increase and explain the justice of their case to get what they want. They think it is just a question of the disposal of votes that settles the amount that shall be paid. The farmers' representatives will be expected to oppose any application just out of cussedness, but if the neutrals do so too it will be ascribed to their anti-labour bias. Both farmers and labourers frequently ask for the

removal of some or all of these neutral members. That is because they both fail to understand the idea underlying Trade Boards and Arbitration Courts so much in evidence in recent years. Their real object is to prevent stoppage of work and generally to remove friction and promote the smooth running of the wheels of industry. It is true the method hasn't always been a success either here or in America, or in Australia or other countries where it has been extensively used. That, however, can be put down to some extent to the indiscreet way some Governments have introduced it. It has been so far successful that there is no likelihood of its being abandoned.

#### What Does Matter.

The workers suffer when they strike, but this doesn't matter in the least to their employers if it were not for the fact that the latter suffer too. The employers have the State behind them and all the chances are in their favour, but even if they were certain of victory they would still prefer a less expensive way of settling disputes. A stoppage of work means no profits, idle machinery, unfulfilled contracts, and the loss of markets to home and foreign competitors.

The ability of the workers at any given time to get a larger share of what they produce depends, not upon the eloquence of their representatives, but on their powers to demand it. A whole intellectual armoury of moral arguments will fail to convince an employer of the justice of a claim if the labour market is overcrowded. If he knows that there are a dozen men willing to take the place of each of his employees for the same or less wages, he will also know that he can reduce wages with impunity. Well organised workers will take advantage of every favourable opportunity to get higher wages, and will fight to prevent any reduction. These are the occasions when strikes are likely to occur, and Arbitration Boards and similar bodies aim at eliminating that risk.

#### A Useful Function.

In agriculture the District Wages Committees serve to gather information about the strength of feeling on any particular question. The representatives of farmers and labourers themselves are in a position to know what action their members will be prepared to take. When one side makes a demand on the Central Board it will almost certainly be opposed by the other. The neutral members, under the skilful guidance of the independent chairman, and acting on reports from the District Committees, will then endeavour to effect a compromise. They must decide on a figure sufficiently high to take

the backbone out of the discontent of the workers, and sufficiently low to be accepted under protest by the employers. Both sides then report their "victory" to those they represent, and everything goes more or less smoothly until further increase in prices produces more discontent.

#### A Bad Outlook.

Just now there is commercial stagnation everywhere. Expectations of the break in prices which was, according to the "Daily Herald," to be the beginning of the new world for the workers, and rumours on every hand of impending bankruptcies, are adding thousands to the already immense army of unemployed. Seasonal unemployment, which meant the standing off of older men and boys at this time of the year, has been a constant feature of rural life, but this has now been aggravated by the competition of unemployed town workers, many of whom, of course, will only recently have left the land for better paid factory jobs.

#### The Nett Result.

The net result is that agricultural workers are not now in a position to demand more money, and the land workers at Halesworth, like those in almost every country, like the workers in every industry, must remain discontented. The most closely organised and highly skilled trades will fight hard, but their success can only be moderate indeed. In the capitalist system repeated unemployment and continual poverty and insecurity are the lot of the workers, and no sectional struggles against its effects can be of lasting benefit while the mass of them support the system through their failure to understand their position in it.

The immediate task of the workers is to study the structure and origin of capitalism, and to learn that there are no short cuts to emancipation; that the solution of the problem of poverty in every industry and in every continent is the same—the abolition of the system of society which requires that the great majority shall be poor in order that a favoured few may live idle and luxurious lives.

E. H.

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## THE OUTLINE OF HISTORY BY H. G. WELLS. A CRITICISM.

### Conclusion.

As Mr. Wells's history approaches modern times it lays greater stress than in earlier epochs upon changes in economic conditions and their profound effects upon social and intellectual life. The reason is, of course, the fact that the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries—the most striking and momentous economic change in the annals of man—is so conspicuously at the root of all the characteristics peculiar to "modern society" that its importance cannot be overlooked nor an account of it shirked.

At the close of Chap. XXXVI. 12, after dealing with the "Enclosure Acts" and the beginnings of the factory system, we find this, for the most part, fine passage:

As the Industrial Revolution went on, a great gulf opened between employer and employed. In the past every manufacturing worker had the hope of becoming an independent master. Even the slave craftsmen of Babylon and Rome were protected by laws that enabled them to save and buy their freedom and to set up for themselves. But now a factory and its engines and machines became a vast and costly thing measured by the scale of the worker's pocket. Wealthy men had to come together to create an enterprise; credit and plant, that is to say, "Capital," were required. "Setting up for oneself" ceased to be the normal hope for an artisan. The worker was henceforth a worker from the cradle to the grave. Besides the landlords and merchants and the money-dealers who financed trading companies and lent their money to the merchants and the State, there now arose this new wealth of industrial capital—a new sort of power in the State.

Many so called Industrial Histories do not state the facts so clearly and frankly as does the above quotation. In a later chapter Mr. Wells deals at greater length with the Industrial Revolution, but while it is itself described in a fairly satisfactory manner, some of its effects upon society are missed. Little mention is made (probably by design, as will be seen later) of the horrors and miseries of the new factory system, nor of the child slaves of the factory lords. The cycles of industrial crises—among the most conspicuous phenomena of the 19th century—are not mentioned at all.

Mr. Wells treats briefly of the early trade unions but, strangely enough, omits to make mention of the Chartist movement. The life and brilliant, though Utopian, schemes of Robert Owen are dealt with at some length as being typical of the Utopian school of thought. Although the authors' misconception of the

Marxian theory lead him to make some very foolish criticisms, he provides the following testimony to Marx's foresight and clarity of thought:

A sense of solidarity between all sorts of poor and propertyless men, as against the profit-amassing and wealth-concentrating class, is growing more and more evident in our world. Old differences fade away, the difference between craftsman and open-air worker, between black-coat and overall. . . . They must all buy the same cheap furnishings and live in similar cheap houses; their sons and daughters will all mingle and marry; success at the upper levels becomes more and more hopeless for the rank and file. Marx, who did not so much advocate the class war, the expropriated mass against the expropriating few, as foretell it, is being more and more justified by events. Chap. XXXIX. 2.

In an earlier chapter the author points out that "The 'solidarity of labour' is, we shall find when we come to study the mechanical revolution of the nineteenth century A.D., a new idea and a new possibility in human affairs."

In the light of the three quotations given above what shall we think of the following extract from an article by Mr. Wells in the "Sunday Express," 14.11.20? "Das Kapital (by Marx) a cadence of wearisome volumes about such phantom unrealities as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. . . . when I encountered Marxists I disposed of them by asking them to tell me exactly what people constitute the proletariat. None of them knew. No Marxist knows." Is this only confusion of thought of an extraordinary variety, or is it deliberate journalistic humbug and lying?

A point which is worthy of comment and appreciation because it is so rare to find it recognised by a non-Marxian writer, is the fact that Mr. Wells sees in the economic needs of the capitalist class the factor which produced "popular education." After mentioning the sectarian night classes and Sunday schools of the early 19th century he says: "The earlier, less enlightened manufacturers, unable to take a broad view of their own interests, hated and opposed these schools. But here again needy Germany led her richer neighbours. The religious teacher found the profit-seeker at his side unexpectedly eager to get the commonality, if not educated, at least 'trained.' The student of English magazines of the middle and later Victorian period may trace the steadily spreading recognition of the new necessity for popular education. . . . At the back of this process was the mechanical revolution . . . insisting inexorably upon the complete abolition of a totally illiterate class throughout the world." (Chap. XXXIX. 2.). Surely Mr. Wells missed a golden opportunity here of demonstrating the

truth and utility of his great theory of "nomadization"?

In the final chapter of the history proper an account is given of the "imperialism" of the European "Powers" and of the political events which led up to the "Great War," followed by a brief but excellent record of the military side of the war itself. In dealing with earlier wars Mr. Wells makes much of "the Powers" as social forces, discusses their "rivalries," and constantly refers to the "traditional policy" of this Power or that. All this is in the approved style of the usual bourgeois "historian." The social forces upon which these "rivalries" and "traditional policies," nay, even the very existence of the "powers" themselves, are based are almost entirely unrecognised.

The author deals in the same barren way with the "Great War." To him it was the inevitable outcome of rampant "nationalism" and "imperialism," but what these were the inevitable outcome of he does not tell us. Here again "nomadization" might have been pressed into service. That war is a necessary result of the capitalist method of production and that nationalism and imperialism are but the theoretical and political expression of two successive phases of this system, Mr. Wells fails to recognise. More satisfactory by far is the account of the material, social, and mental effects of the war. Here Mr. Wells gets nearer to bed-rock economic facts. He is greatly influenced by and quotes lengthily from the "Economic Consequences of the Peace," by J. M. Keynes.

In the final chapter of his work our historian ventures a forecast of the future of society. He sees the ideal community of the future as a "Community of Knowledge and Will." This, if interpreted as a community of knowledge and interest is quite an acceptable forecast. The various details of this society which Mr. Wells enumerates we need not trouble about. Criticising utopias of the distant future is a waste of energy. Vividly he points out the possibilities inherent in the machine. "This—and the disappearance of war and the smoothing out of endless restraints and contentions by juster social and economic arrangements—will lift the burden of toilsome work and routine work, that has been the price of human security since the dawn of the first civilizations, from the shoulders of our children. Which does not mean that they will cease to work, but that they will cease to do irksome work under pressure, and will work freely, planning, making, creating, according to their gifts and instincts. They will fight nature no longer as dull conscripts of the pick and plough, but for a splendid conquest."

He discusses the possibilities of and tendencies towards this ideal community, but the fact that he denies the socially constructive importance of the modern class struggle drives him to the conclusion that the only hope lies in a great revival of moral enthusiasm (which he mistakenly calls "religion") combined with "education." We also believe in the efficacy of education—revolutionary education amongst the world's proletariat. But Mr. Wells's "education" is a universal instruction for social service. We also believe in that, but see and point out that it is an impossible dream in a society grounded on exploitation and class-rule. Such a scheme of education can and will only be achieved *after* the Socialist Revolution—not *before*.

It is Mr. Wells's opinion that the ruling class of to-day can be persuaded by reasonable, humanitarian arguments or by far-sighted self-interest to bring about a "re-adjustment" of society which will gradually abolish exploitation and class distinctions. This opinion we cannot share. It is opposed by the whole teaching of history. No ruling class when faced by discontent and revolt ever acted in such a manner. To expect our present rulers to do so is to wallow in superstition rather than stand four-square to science.

Mr. Wells has guided us through latter-day history upon a plan of his own. He has emphasised the stupidity and ignorance of our ruling class and its political representatives, but his standard has been an idealist, not a realist one. Gladstone, a typical capitalist statesman, is declared, for instance, a "grossly ignorant man." But W.E.G. can only be considered ignorant in a relative sense. Everyone is ignorant by some standard of wisdom. Gladstone did what was expected of him by the class he represented. He conformed to the conditions imposed upon him. He was sufficiently wise for his task and no wiser. Thus he became the most popular and revered statesman of his age—he became "great."

But the great "sin of omission" on the part of Mr. Wells is that he fails to point out—in the present writer's opinion deliberately refrains from pointing out, for he must know of it—that for greed, stubbornness, and rapacity in the defence of their interests—even their most grossly material interests—the capitalist class of the present order have shown themselves worthy successors of the slave- and serf-holders of preceding periods, whilst for political craftiness the earlier ruling classes were "children at the game" in comparison with the modern bourgeoisie.

Why does Mr. Wells make no mention whatever in his review of the nineteenth century, of the Paris Commune? This was no mere political episode, but an object lesson in sociology and, as such, one of the most significant occurrences of the century. Mr. Wells is no "drum and trumpet" historian, but to him a to the common run of bourgeois historians the Commune is *taboo*. With its 100,000 working-class victims the Paris Commune tears aside the veil of hypocrisy and humanitarian cant which envelop the social relations of our day and reveal naked the power-lust of the capitalist class. The more recent history of the class struggle in Russia, Finland, Germany, and Hungary but confirms and strengthens our view. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive that Mr. Wells, with his knowledge, really believes in the tactic of moralising the capitalist class. In the present writer's opinion Mr. Wells knows better. But as an experienced and "successful" writer and journalist, camouflage (to be polite) is one of the tools of his trade.

In conclusion: It is one of the minor tragedies of capitalism that in this "scientific age" the scientific history of our race has yet to be written. Material in abundance lies in the archives, museums, and libraries of the world, and the theoretical means thereto have existed for close upon a century. But the capitalist class forbid. Let us work mightily for the great day when those social parasites which thus paralyse the activity of that supreme product of evolution—the intellect of man—will be banished with the dead and gone into the limbo of the past.

R. W. HOUSLEY.

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## MANIFESTO

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### A TILT AT A TRAVESTY.

THE SOCIALIST ILLUSION, A Critical Review of the Principles of State Socialism. By Bernard Taylor. Allen & Unwin. Paper, 1s. 3d.

It will be noted that Mr. Taylor entitles his book "The Socialist Illusion" and immediately qualifies his title by describing the work as "a critical review of the principles of State Socialism." It is difficult to tell from the reading whether the author is aware of the wide difference between Socialism and the purely capitalist notion of nationalising industries under the control of the capitalist State. In places it would almost appear that he does realise this difference, though nowhere does he attempt to prove his "Socialist illusion." Instead, he shows the fallacies of State Socialism and nationalisation, though this has been done long ago by the Socialist, and far more effectively.

In a long chapter entitled "Economic Factors" Mr. Taylor labours pitifully to persuade his readers that the capitalist only gets a very small share of the total wealth produced and that he is really necessary to production. In another chapter, on "State Confiscation," he says that the Labour leaders, while denying that Socialism means confiscation, mean that and nothing else. Holding this view he should have tried to show the fallacy of trying to establish a new order of society after the capitalists had been expropriated. Instead, he devotes his space to the much easier task of showing what a financial mess the State would be in if it took over certain industries, either paying for them or guaranteeing a dividend or interest, while at the same time fixing a higher standard of living for the workers, maintenance while unemployed, etc.

"The State as Captain of Industry" heads another chapter, in which it is declared that trade, under salaried managers, would languish and die, forgetting meanwhile that the big and thriving concerns under capitalism are run in this way, and are rapidly ousting the small concerns managed by their owners. In chapter 6, where our author pretends to deal with the question of production under Socialism, it would almost appear that he is entirely ignorant of the meaning of the word Socialism, or even of many of the phrases he uses, such as "production for use," "under Socialism there would be no trade in the sense in which we understand it," etc. Under Socialism, he says, every undertaking would have to pay its way, consequently useful services, like railways, etc., will cease to be run because the extra costs of running would swallow up the small dividend now paid.

Instead of levelling his criticism at Socialism

Mr. Taylor merely tilts at nationalisation, the red herring that the Labour Party drags across the path of the workers. This is the more remarkable seeing that he deliberately accuses the Labour Party of being out for confiscation, which by depriving the capitalist class of ownership in the means of wealth production, would naturally leave them in the workers' possession. His chief mistakes are due to the fact that he has failed to conceive the possibility of the working class attaining sufficient knowledge to establish a system where the means of life, being owned in common, could be operated according to a settled plan without the intervention of trade.

Under capitalism exchange, or trade, must take place because the product of labour is privately owned. But under Socialism it becomes merely a question of producing and distributing, or making available the goods and services required. Each member of the community would take part in the necessary labour and enjoy the fullest life possible under the existing conditions and development of the means of production.

Mr. Taylor sees in capitalist society the distribution of goods taking place on a basis of exchange and imagines that it is this exchange that effects the distribution. But the exchange is merely a social arrangement; the actual distribution is a result of working-class activities. The workers first produce and then move the goods to where they are wanted. The social arrangement that imposes exchange on top of these quite adequate operations are those historically developed institutions, private, or class, ownership of the means of wealth-production—and therefore of the wealth produced—and the commodity character of human labour-power. On these trade and commerce are built up, and Mr. Taylor on page 21 exclaims, "A marvellous thing is commerce" and on page 23, "Socialists in destroying commerce would destroy the machinery for producing wealth."

True, commerce is a marvellous thing, not for the production of wealth, however, but for its appropriation by the ruling class. Commerce enables the capitalist class to realise the surplus-value contained in commodities, the difference between the wages paid for their production and their real value. Mr. Taylor has read all about surplus-value and his only comment is that "so far from there being a surplus, there is in a large proportion of cases a minus" (p. 53). And again on p. 132, "It was always nearer the truth, and is so still, that Labour received at least elevenpence in the shilling and often the entire shilling." He tries to prove these wild statements by imaginary

cases of concerns that have gone on paying wages when no profits have been forthcoming, and by figures recording capitalist failures. But whether a firm fails or succeeds is not evidence that the worker's commodity is paid for above its value.

But "what a marvellous thing is commerce" from the worker's point of view! The competitive struggle for markets between capitalists falls entirely on the workers. It is they that must produce ever more cheaply by working with greater intensity for wages that are continually being reduced with the slackening of demand. It is the workers, too, that starve when there is abundance, when the markets are choked with commodities they cannot buy because they are unemployed. Truly a marvellous thing is commerce, Mr. Taylor's machinery for producing wealth—those who work it cannot satisfy their own needs, while those who own it are powerless in the face of its staggering over-production, which is the root cause of the intense conflict for markets.

Sometimes our author exposes his own lack of understanding of ordinary terms and definitions. On page 49 he says: "So also the labour power expended upon a commodity is not more than one factor in its production. Take for example the machines which are used. Probably the actual construction of the machines has been the result of mechanical labour, but who knows exactly what brain power has been expended in the invention and development of the machine, and not only of the machine as a whole but of the many individual parts which in their turn have demanded the application of the brain power of perhaps scores of persons not one of whom was a mere artisan."

Here we see that his conception of labour-power is "mechanical labour" or the labour of "artisans," whereas within the term labour power is included not only low-skilled labour, but the organising abilities of the foremen and managers, and even the intellectual qualities of professionals. The fact that the possessors of such forms of energy have to sell them in order to live, places them all in the same category, i.e., purveyors of labour power. All are combinations of nervous and muscular energy. In supposing that labour power means only that combination of nervous and muscular energy common to labourers and artisans, Mr. Taylor shows a lamentable ignorance of bourgeois economics, which long ago accepted the definition of labour power given above.

Again on p. 27 he shows that he is incapable of drawing a correct conclusion from his own facts. In a paragraph too long to quote in full he supposes a group of capitalists who pool

CONTINUED ON P. 89.



follow blindly anyone with a strong and commanding personality, a glibness of tongue, or a persuasive manner. This gullibility is almost incredible, until one remembers past occasions and incidents, such as occurred, for instance, during the late European war and the General Election campaign during the close of 1918.

Thus it is easy for a would-be leader to obtain followers and an enormous ascendancy over them. The material he has to work upon has been so well prepared for him that little or no difficulty is found in making people accept at his own valuation; in making them believe in his superior wisdom and attainments; that it would be all to their benefit to follow unquestioningly whatever dictates he may give or in whatever direction he may lead; that he is a man to be trusted, a shepherd whose only desire is to bring his sheep to more juicy pastures and better feeding places.

On the part of the leaders themselves, various motives may come into operation in the process of elevating a member of the rank and file to a position, as a full blown labour leader. The motive may be a desire on his part for place and power; for a better social position; for money and the power it gives. He may desire to escape from a hard and uncongenial task to an easier and more congenial one. He may see dangling before his eyes a position in Parliament and the emoluments that generally accompany such a position. He may realise how much more valuable to the capitalist Press (and consequently how much more remunerative to the writer) are articles written by a prominent labour leader in comparison with those written by a mere rank-and-file. It may even be at the outset that he sincerely believes that in accepting the position offered him he is doing what is best for those from whose ranks he has risen—though in this case, the strength of the social and political environment in which he finds himself—a totally different environment as a leader from that in which he moved before—will very quickly change his outlook and bring him into line with those of his confreres who look down from their high altitude at the plane from which they have sprung and wonder how in the world they could ever have found anything in common with the denizens of such a benighted district.

In any case, whatever the motive may be, it is inevitable that directly a man reaches a position wherein he is able to exercise to their fullest extent his powers of personality, or plausibility, or rhetoric—that is the very powers that have enabled him to occupy the place he does—he is to all intents and purposes a martinet whose word is law and who is able to sway whatever way suits him the people

from whom he has risen and who have themselves elected him to the position he holds.

Take the generality of labour leaders. One would have thought that long ere this their followers would have seen on which side—the workers' or the capitalists'—these men actually were. Their past record is sufficient for any impartial observer to perceive that their sole aim is their own advancement, and that they are astute enough to see that such advancement will be quicker and better obtained by keeping in agreement with the capitalists rather than by opposing them. But their followers are too obtuse to understand what is happening, or even when, in rare instances, their eyes are opened, they prefer to put up with the men they have elected rather than dismiss them and admit that they have been misled, gulled, and betrayed by those to whom they have been stupid enough to give their confidence and trust.

A short time ago a prominent trade union official and member of Parliament was subjected to a good deal of criticism from certain recalcitrant members of his union with regard to his activities on behalf of the capitalists more directly connected with his particular union. His retort to his critics was a threat to resign, whereon all criticism was immediately silenced and as a mark of confidence his salary was raised. Not only so, but soon after he was presented with other pecuniary tokens of his followers' reverence for authority and their willing acceptance of the fact of their inferiority. When one comes to consider the question, it must really be the easiest thing in the world—for anyone with few scruples and plenty of bluff to lead such a purblind and readily deluded mob as the bulk of the working class is at present. "In the kingdom of the blind the one eyed man is king," and the workers are so blind to their own interests that the men they elect as leaders, however oblique of vision they may be, apparently appear quite god-like in comparison with the electors own humble opinion of themselves.

It is not surprising that when these "men in authority" are offered a well-paid Government position they jump at the chance of bettering themselves and throw over without the slightest compunction the rather shaky props upon which they have risen. So it will continue as long as the workers remain in their present condition of economic and political ignorance.

They must first of all realise their class position of wage slaves and ascertain why they are wage-slaves. Then will come in due course a knowledge of their tremendous strength as a social force and their organisation in the Socialist Party, which has no leaders in any

shape or form. To follow blindly anyone or anything is a sure symptom of mental weakness. The training and strengthening of the working-class intellect is the first step towards the emancipation of the workers from the degradation which is the inevitable outcome of their position as wage-slaves into the freedom of body and mind desired by the Socialist, not only for himself and his class, but for all men and women—even perhaps (though this may sound fantastic) for labour leaders. F. J. WEBB.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### The "Daily Herald" Finds a Defender.

TO THE EDITORS.

The current issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD drifted into my hands this week, and I was somewhat surprised to find an article by "D.W.F." attacking the "Daily Herald."

It may be possible to look down upon the "Daily Herald" from the lofty pinnacle of Socialism, but is it not possible for Socialists to admit that the "Daily Herald" is in advance of the rest of the daily Press? It may obtain funds from the co-operative societies and trade unions, and trade union officials may have a voice on the board, but is it not good for the workers that trade unionists have a voice in the policy of just one of the many daily papers?

Why sneer at the "Daily Herald" for advancing its price from 1d. to 2d. because the capitalists will not buy advertisement space?

Why allude to the editor as "the renegade Atheist Lansbury?" I do not judge a man by the opinions he has held, or does hold. I judge him by his works, and I venture to say that George Lansbury will go down in history as one of the few men of this generation who have accomplished something for the betterment of mankind.

George Lansbury has spent his life in working for the proletariat; after years of endeavour he has established a workers' paper that makes its voice heard amidst the retrograde screeches of the capitalist's Press. If D.W.F. finds the paper not to his liking I would remind him that the circulation is only some 300,000 in a population of forty millions, therefore there is plenty of scope, and I think that instead of "crying down" the most advanced paper we have, he would be better employed in copying George Lansbury (if he can) and starting another advanced paper more in keeping with his personal views. E. JULIUS MILLS.

Mr. Mills having come into possession of the November "S.S." through its having "drifted" into his hands, has let at least one item of its

contents drift into his head, namely, an article by myself applying some moderate criticism to the "Daily Herald." I say moderate because the criticism would have caused greater displeasure to him had I found time to go into the subject in greater detail. For instance, I did mention that the subject of his championship boxes the compass politically in every issue, or I should rather say, *nearly* boxes the compass, the qualification being admissible because one point of politics is always avoided, and that is Socialism. This, however, causes no disappointment to the Socialist, who would not look to such a reactionary journal for his principles. Nevertheless it is necessary that the non-Socialist worker who is seeking knowledge shall be warned of the pitfalls set for the unwary in the shape of pseudo-Socialist journals and organisations. The "Daily Herald" coming in the former category, is exposed so that the awakening consciousness of the working class shall not be stifled through its agency. We Socialists have an objection to seeing seekers after truth progressing sideways like the crab; we know the necessity of forward movement, and as far as we are able we ensure it. Any casual examination of the doctrines propounded in the "Herald" will show the confusion of thought with which its readers are confronted; for instance, side by side with pious protestations that Socialism is the only *ultimate* cure for the disabilities imposed upon society by capitalism, one will find a medley of appeals for its palliation, such as nationalisation or public ownership of mines, railways, tramways and the like.

Let me put a question to my critic. If Socialism is the only thing that can benefit the worker, how can he claim that Lansbury is "working for the proletariat" by inducing them to waste their energies in chasing will-o'-the-wisps which he and his scribes admit will not *ultimately* benefit the worker, which means that if all their palliatives became accomplished facts the Social Revolution would still have to be attained? Lansbury and his gang know full well that whilst the workers are engaged in shadow-chasing those things that matter are being neglected, and this is a knowledge shared by all misleaders of the working class, from Tory Coalitionists to Lansbury and his satellites.

In reply to the query "is it not possible for Socialists to admit that the "Daily Herald" is in advance of the rest of the daily Press?" as I said in my contribution to the November issue, the "Daily Herald" tells a little more of the truth than its avowedly capitalist rivals "when it suits the powers behind it"—from which it may be gathered that the "advance" is a mere instrument in their reactionary policy.

As to whether it is "good for the workers that trade unionists have a voice in the policy of just one of the many daily papers," that depends entirely upon the daily paper, and when one finds that the contributors to the "Herald" are interchangeable with nearly the whole field of the capitalist Press, one is not moved to transports of delight in this regard. Let me quote a few of the luminaries of the labour firmament who scintillate from the columns of the "Daily Herald": J. N. Thomas, John Scurr, Ben Tillet, Margaret Bondfield, Ben Turner. How long does my critic think the working class will require to overthrow capitalism if such are to be their teachers?

I deny sneering at the "Herald" for raising its price. The Socialist Party have had to raise the price of the "S.S." recently, but not because the capitalists would not buy advertisement space. We, being a Socialist organisation, do not accept capitalist advertisements, and surely it should be obvious to my critic that the capitalist is not likely to support that which is out to overthrow him. It is significant that the "Daily Herald" gets even the advertisements that it does. Mr. Mills has probably also noticed that there has been some back-scratching just lately between the paper he champions and the "Evening News" over the new "Advertisers Demand Nett Sales" dodge, and if he stretches his memory a little he will remember that Mr. Lansbury explained in an article on the "Russian Gold" that the "Daily Mail" and other capitalist papers came to its aid over the period of the paper shortage. Apart from all this it is clear that journals touting for advertisements have to suit their policies to their advertisers' liking. Could Mr. Mills imagine the "Daily Herald" attacking the Co-operative Wholesale Society or Messrs. Bolson?

When the class-conscious workers decide that the time is ripe for the Socialist daily paper they will support it and see that its welfare is not bound up with the activities of capitalist advertisers. They will want to be posted as to the progress of the movement and the steps the enemy are taking to crush it, not to read about Pelman's for Pimply Brains. They will expect and get the uncompromising hostility of the capitalist class.

No, George Lansbury has not "spent his life working for the proletariat. On the contrary, he has spent it in very effectively working for himself.

The prospect that is offered to me, as a parting shot, that I copy Lansbury—ye gods, a prospect indeed!—by "starting another advanced paper more in keeping" with my views would be very enticing if it were not for the fact that this population of 45 millions includes

a few too many millions of people who think as my critic does, and who therefore stand in the way of working-class emancipation by supporting political charlatans and time-servers instead of working for Socialism. In any case, were the workers ready to start a Socialist daily it would not be for me to do it. I or some other individual or individuals might be the instruments chosen, but it would necessarily be controlled by the organised class-conscious workers themselves and run according to their dictates, and not "more in keeping" with my views, or those of any other individual.

Maybe my critic has got too set in the habit of letting things "drift" into his hands and head, but if not my advice to him is that he should stop the "drift" policy and adopt a new plan. That plan is to study Socialism, understand it, and then join in the fight for the overthrow of capitalism, for the new world which awaits the proletariat when they have discarded their chains—a world in which no man shall be another's master: all shall be free.

D. W. F.

### SAVING THE RATES.

It is often stated that Labour representatives busy themselves with affairs that are of no concern to the class they are elected to represent. Indeed, they appear to go out of their way in order to give effective support to measures that are calculated to serve the interests of the class which exploits labour. A superficial examination of the workings of any municipal authority will show that its function is usually confined to matters of supervising the running of profit-making trams, gas-works, or any old thing which can be utilised for the purpose of producing a profit in order that the rate-payers (that is, the property holders) shall not be unduly pressed. Any worker, if he be candid, will tell you that he doesn't care a rap whether the streets are paved or not so long as his job is secure and a wage coming in. That is where he is chiefly interested. Consequently, whether the rates be high or low it cannot be of any concern to the worker. Being a propertyless person and a wage slave into the bargain, it cannot be held that he possesses any assessable property. Living, at the best of times, virtually from hand to mouth, his chief concern is the getting of the wherewithal to fill his mouth. If Labour received all the wealth it produces—that is, all wealth—then the story would be different. All of which is a sufficient reason why the doings of the Labour men on the vari-

ous municipal bodies should be condemned, since they all appear to go the same way. A recent instance at Lambeth is a case in point.

The Borough Council formerly put out all its refuse collecting to contract. Due to pressure by the labour members it was decided to introduce a scheme of "direct municipal enterprise." To use a less fanciful term, it was resolved that they shift their own muck. The borough engineer's estimate worked out at something like £9,600 for six months. After working the scheme the actual cost proved to be nearly £1,000 less, which made a total saving in four wards of £3,235 on the lowest tender for contract work. This is an instance of "saving the rôtes in which Labour representatives excell.

It might be argued that since Labour doesn't benefit either way, what's the odds? But it matters a great deal, because if these men were to devote the time, energy, and money spent on easing the "burden" of the master class to a different purpose—that of getting to understand the real interests of the workers and then getting others to understand—then the odds would be in our favour. As it is, the work of these individuals only redounds to the credit of the capitalist class: being the dominant class in the present system of society it follows that only its welfare is worthy of consideration. If these people are not doing their duty to the class they pretend to represent, then obviously the thing to do is to repudiate them and expose their work on every possible occasion. This applies especially to those who hold good and lucrative jobs both in the House of Commons and in the various trade unions. They believe the workers to be sheep that require to be led, whereas they are asses—for allowing it. It is time the game of "follow my leader" was played out. What is needed is not leadership, but knowledge—in large doses. This is easily accessible to the worker if he will not be side-tracked by any such rubbish as benefiting by the saving of rates.

A last pointer: which is troubling the workers most at the present moment—rising rates or falling wages? TOM SALA.

### ATTENTION, PLEASE!

Will members of the Party and sympathisers living in and around the Fulham District communicate with Frank Mortlock, 540 Fulham Road, Walham Green, S.W.6., with a view to establishing a branch of the Socialist Party in that district?

### CAPITALIST FEARS AND ADMISSIONS.

The ever-increasing development of machinery—a law of existence to capitalism—begets problems faster than they can be solved. "Efficiency," the watchword of the capitalists, works with a boomerang effect through the glutting of world markets and compulsory closing down of industry, and a realisation of this sets to work the brains of professors, journalists, and individual capitalists, thinking out schemes for the weathering of commercial storms which grow more intensive in ratio with increasing productive forces.

So it is that the capitalist Press gives a large amount of space to the discussion of society's problems, and the more conscious members of the master class draw attention to and attempt to solve the various problems.

"Printer's Ink" for November contains a report of a speech delivered by Wm. B. Dickson (President Midvale Steel Corporation) before the American Society of Engineers, in which he declares:

"Efficiency in all lines of human endeavour is greatly to be desired, yet I fear that we are in danger of making a fetish of efficiency such as to endanger human freedom. It is a deadly menace in a people clothed with political power but stunted in body and soul by their environment. The tendency [sic] of modern industry is towards autocratic control of the workers through ownership of what our Socialistic friends term 'the tools of production,' which include not only the natural resources, but also the furnaces, mills, factories, and transportation systems." (Italics mine.)

Just how this autocratic control of the workers arose, exists, and is maintained has been explained innumerable times in the columns of the "S.S."

Divorced from the ownership of the necessary tools of production, the workers are compelled to sell the only power they possess—the power to labour—and in return receive wages which represent in the main only the bare necessities needed to produce that labour power, despite the fact that their energy, applied to the materials they work with adds value to the subject of their labour. The products, however, remain the property of the masters, who proceed to realise their profits by selling the products on the market. Thus, being dependent upon the masters, the workers are enslaved and subjected to exploitation, which grows more and more intense, with the result that ever more quickly markets are flooded and more workers

are thrown on their own resources—which means that they are at liberty to starve.

Lest we appear biased, let Mr. Dickson describe the process of shutting down industry. He says: "The merchants were driven out of business, real estate values were depreciated, and the workers were thrown on their own resources and had to break up their homes and seek employment elsewhere. None of these persons had any voice in the momentous decision, which was made in a New York office and which resulted in social paralysis in all of these communities. . . . It is the effect of the unconscious insolence of conscious power.

By reason of this condition we have the unstable situation of a government founded on the suffrages of men who—for all practical purposes—are industrially bond men."

Coming to his solution of the problem the steel magnate declares for a "fair system of collective bargaining," and insists that the worker must be given a real stake in the enterprise, slyly suggesting that the employee should be induced to invest his savings. Also a greater measure of management must be introduced according to this capitalist sociologist, who goes on to issue the following warning to those who will have nothing to do with "industrial democracy." "My answer to this is that all human relations are not static but dynamic, and unless I am mistaken as to the direction and force of the tide which is now running so strongly in human affairs your choice will not lie between the present system of industrial control and industrial democracy."

Ah! the cat is out of the bag. Of what can Mr. Dickson be afraid? SOCIALISM! as is obvious from his quotation from Carnegie's "Problems of to-day." "Revolutionary Socialism is successfully to be combatted only by promptly conceding the just claims of moderate men."

What a noble compliment to the pseudo-Socialists who are the formulators of "just claims" and so-called working-class reforms. Like the Italian premier, Mr. Dickson would like to be able to declare that "Socialism has been prevented for at least fifty years," but because he is not confident in either his own solution or the many other palliatives which have been advocated at different times and in so many different guises, he is compelled to fall back upon the bourgeois religion of hope. He concluded his address with the following: "I am hopeful that our generation will guess the sphinx riddle, and that 'Out of the nettle, danger, will pluck the flower, safety.'"

So much for Mr. Dickson. We will now turn to another defender of the bulwarks of capitalism, Mr. Hoover, who is reported by the New

York "Daily News" of November 20th as saying before the Federated Engineering Societies that "the intermittency of unemployment . . . the ever-present industrial conflicts by strike and lockout produce infinite wastes and great suffering. The aggregation of great wealth with its power to economic domination presents social economic ills which we are constantly struggling to remedy."

Hoover, like Mr. Dickson, is concerned with the removal of this condition of affairs which gives the workers innumerable object lessons which, with the aid of Socialist analysis, will bring them to a definite acceptance of Socialism. He asserts that employers frequently overlook the fact that "Labour organisations as they stand to-day are the greatest bulwarks against Socialism."

He also advocates shop committees "imbued with the principle of co-operation" and discloses another "shilling under the foot," for apropos of the recent agitation on the part of master-class associations against the closed shop he remarked: "There would be little outcry against the closed shop if it were closed in order to secure unity of purpose in constructive increase of production by offering the full value of the worker's mind and effort as well as his hands." In other words, a BRAIN-SUCKING SCHEME with which the British worker is familiar under the guise of Whitley councils, Nationalisation schemes, etc.

Mr. Hoover's solution is no solution, but an aggravation of the problem, as indeed all capitalist solutions tend to be. Although they see how they are compelled to dig their own graves they are also compelled to evolve even bigger tools for the purpose. Shop committees, whether built up from the more conservative unions or the ultra-revolutionary (sic) industrial unions, will, according to his theory, serve as the instrument for removing minor points of friction in this industrial machine, as well as contribute by suggestion towards more efficient development.

Always tinged with the insatiable greed for wealth, the solutions offered by the master class fall short, as that very profit lust is the expression of the causes of the problem and it cannot be solved without their self-abolition or without the working class organising for that purpose.

While production is social the product is privately owned, and as the workers can only absorb wealth according to their meagre purchasing power, and the master class cannot dispose of the surplus wealth even by indulging in stupendous orgies of waste, distributing centres become choked with wealth and the cycle of unemployment and starvation in the midst of plenty is gone over again until the

wealth is gradually absorbed and the channels once more freed. Private ownership, then, is the root cause of the problem, and it is at the root cause we must strike.

Capitalism is rotten, as is evident from a glance over the headlines in any newspaper. Crime, disease, oppression, starvation, indicate the social and economic bankruptcy of the system of private ownership of property, and we of the working class can confidently go ahead to wield ourselves into the party which shall take the helm and usher in the system that, for the first time in the history of man, shall make freedom possible. While the masters are futilely trying to "pluck the nettle," we Socialists shall continue the educational work which makes the roses grow on the cheeks of a working-class party determined to make use of the political power with which we are clothed and digging out the weed of capitalism which chokes most that is best in human relations.

We declare with Engles: "To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement—Scientific Socialism."

ATLANTIC

### MY LADY TELLS 'EM ORF.

Ingratitude is a most despairing fault. Whenever or wherever it rears its ugly form combat must inevitably be given by those among us of culture, tone, and gentility. Small wonder then, that my good Lady Bathurst should feel so distressed at the alarming evidences of working-class ingratitude around her. So disturbed is she in her contemplation of the dire effects of their ungrateful attitude that the kindly lady has spared a few of her precious moments to rebuke them, gently but firmly, in a letter to the Press.

Let us hope that their ingratitude is not so hopelessly ingrained that they will not feel at least a tinge of gratefulness for the solicitude so potently portrayed in this generous admonition. Hear her!

Nowhere in the world was so much done for the working class as in England. Privileges and gifts were showered upon them by the Government, by local authorities, and private individuals. Clubs and halls, hospitals and libraries, were maintained for them, but she had noticed of late years these things were accepted as a matter of course; they were not in the least grateful.—("Daily News," 15.1.21.)

The charm of this rebuke lies in its restraint. Who could have been surprised if her ladyship had adopted a tone more curt? Even violence of expression the circumstances would warrant. Her ladyship's late lamented friend Lord Fisher would doubtless have done greater justice to the theme. It is quite possible the time given to penning this kindly warning to the workers might have encroached on a visit to the opera, or perchance have delayed her in allowing her maid to dress her for a ball. Surely the reasonableness and charity of my lady cannot be lost on those workers she has had to chide, and the spirit of her homily will not go unheeded. Let those workers see to it that in future no such cause for complaint is left to agitate this generous lady. Remember, she and her class never show ingratitude toward you, the workers. True, they never show gratitude either, but where's the need? You plough their land for them; you till the soil; you burrow your way into the bowels of the earth and bring to them minerals for their use and wealth for their aggrandisement. You sweat yourselves and stint yourselves in your mad haste to procure and fashion all that makes their lives an orgy of enjoyment. You starve your minds and bodies and your children's minds and bodies, so that they and theirs may have pleasure and leisure. You shed your blood, you mangle your limbs, you surrender to the tortures of the factory hell your progeny in their service. And yet they need not show you gratitude! They need not even show you decency.

On, on, fellow workers, will you go in your hopelessness, and idle parasites will lecture you in their mocking tones until—. Until you learn the simplicity of your emancipation; until you see the hope that lies in your dormant mighty strength, and, rousing yourselves, you sweep away for ever the subjection of your class.

In the consummation of your mission you will have rid your contemporaries of the pest of indolent ladies and their patronising insolence will have been forgotten. W. H. S.

### "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

### TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Quite number of excellent contributions have been crowded out this month, and the writers thereof are to be congratulated on their work, even where lapse of time and other things prevent their articles being published. Some will see the light next month, some are pigeon-holed for future use, and some, alas!—.

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Mattheu-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jasper, Sec., 74 Murdock-rd., Handsworth, Birmingham. Branch meets Sat. at Coffee House, Spiceal-st.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Com.tee. Applications to General Secy.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Secy., 142 Bulwar-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigden-rd. Schools, opposite Hackney Downs Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Weds, Working Mens Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., J. Gallagher, 10 Sydney-st., Hanley, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to J. Lachlan, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Sec., T. Hall, 48 Mayfield Grove, Gorton, Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8, at Exmouth-St. Schools (L.C.C.), Hampstead-rd., N.W. Communications to W. F. Tickner, 51 High-rd., Willesden-green, N.W.10.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Secy., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Secy., 62 Haverhill-rd., Balham, S.W.12. Branch meets Fridays at 143 Beechcroft-rd., Upper Tooting at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secy., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Secy., 11 Carlton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Secy., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.11

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mays-rd., N.22.

**S. P. G. B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Tooting, Totterdown Street, 7.30 p.m.  
Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Parliament Hill Fields, 11 a.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m. [Garrett Lane, 8 p.m.]

**Thursdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.  
Battersea, Mossbury Rd., Lavender Hill, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.

No. 199. VOL. 17.] LONDON, MARCH. 1921. [MONTHLY, TWO PENCE

## THE WOMAN'S PLACE—

THE SITUATION REVIEWED.

The Labour Research Department recently published the report of an enquiry made by a joint committee of that organisation and the Fabian Women's Group. The subject of the enquiry was "Women in Trade Unions," and the writer Barbara Drake, chairman of the Joint Committee. The report embodies much useful historical information, mainly drawn, we are told, from "the early reports and journals of the Women's Trade Union League [founded under the name of the Women's Protection and Provident League in 1874], and of some of the older trade unions."

### The Problem Stated.

During the present period of widespread unemployment, the minds of men trade unionists are much exercised upon the problem raised by the presence of women in industry, and a few words on the subject of this report may not be amiss.

The problem is not a new one and it may be summarised thus: Experience of capitalist industry shows that the entrance of women into a department of production formerly filled by men alone endangers the men's standard of wages and threatens to drive them from employment. How shall men protect their livelihood?

### Male Camouflage.

True they have from time to time given their concern a moral or humane disguise, but always "the voice is the voice of Jacob"—"unfair female competition" is what they fear. Thus as long ago as 1811 the Journeymen Tailors' Society complained that women had been "unfairly driven from their sphere in the social scale, unfeelingly torn from the maternal duties of a parent and unjustly encouraged to compete with men in ruining the money-value of labour".

(p. 4). In the eighties, when women, long employed in the cotton mill as "piecers," were introduced as spinners at a lower rate of wages than the men received, the local spinners' union declared that "the surroundings were totally unsuited to maintaining that feminine modesty of thought and behaviour which it is the duty of everyone to encourage and protect" (p. 23). So also at the Trade Union Congress held at Leicester in 1877, Mr. Broadhurst (secretary of the Parliamentary Committee,) said in moving a resolution to extend the restrictions on female labour: "They [the men] had the future of their country and their children to consider, and it was their duty as men and husbands to use their utmost efforts to bring about a condition of things where their wives should be in their proper sphere at home, *instead of being dragged into competition against the great and strong men of the world* (q. 16).

### The Common Rule.

This gentleman's resolution was carried, according to the report, "by an overwhelming majority of men delegates," and indicates one method (the more popular) by which organised men have endeavoured to solve their problem—that of excluding women as far as possible from all but traditional women's trades. The report reminds us that "Trade union restrictions on female labour are the common rule in organised trades. According as the men's trade unions are strong, female labour is entirely prohibited—any future, if not the present generation of workers—or women are restricted to certain inferior branches of the industry, or to certain unorganised districts. . . . A genuine indifference to lines of sex demarcation is practically confined to cotton weavers" (p. 229).

Now women workers have always, for obvious reasons, resisted movements to confine them to

domestic work and needlecrafts; indeed, on the demobilisation of male workers in 1919, and the discharge of "substituted" women, "the strongest pressure brought to bear by the Employment Exchanges, even to the extent of withdrawing unemployment benefit, failed to drive any large number of women back to domestic service, and the uncongenial conditions of 'living in'" (p. 108).

#### Employers Support Women's Right to be Exploited.

Equally determined opposition is raised by employers. These gentlemen are staunch champions of the right of working women to compete with their husbands and brothers, and welcome the invention of any new process which brings an industrial operation within the capacity of women. That women command lower wages influences them not at all, you will understand. Lest you suspect mercenary motives in their gallantry, they have two excellent arguments in support of a double standard of wages.

There is a great difference, they will tell you, between the needs of men and those of women. Should the single woman, they ask, be paid at the same rate as the family man? Now at the very first glance there appears something amiss with this argument; for as pointed out by Miss Drake, "a system of wages which merely distinguishes between one sex and another, fails in its express object of providing for the separate needs of different groups of workers. Between the family man and the bachelor, the widow with dependents and the wife or daughter partially supported at home, needs must vary at least as much in degree as between one sex and another. The fact should not be overlooked that there are actually more bachelors than spinsters employed in industry" (p. 228).

#### The Economic Aspect.

In point of fact, human labour power is bought by the capitalist in the open market like any other commodity which he intends to use in production. A commodity's value is determined by the labour-time socially necessary to reproduce it—in this case to produce such food, clothing, shelter, entertainment, and so on, as constitute the normal standard of living for a working-man, a wife, and an average family. The latter are inevitably taken into the calculation, because without them there would be no reproduction of the species and therefore no continued reproduction of human labour power. Wages are the price of labour power, which, like the price of all commodities, does not always coincide with value, but oscillates about it, rising above when demand is great in relation to supply, and falling below

when the reverse is the case. As the former case is so rare as to be almost unknown in modern industry, the perpetual tendency is for wages to fall. The object of trade union organisation is to check this tendency by strengthening the worker in his bargaining with his master. In brief, as Barbara Drake naively says: "Even a Government Department cannot afford to neglect ordinary commercial considerations; whilst private employers, exposed to the keen competition of rival firms, are practically obliged to ignore all others, and to buy their labour [a careful economist would have said "labour-power"] if not in the cheapest market, at least to their own best advantage" (p. 228).

Bearing this in mind, it is easy to understand the fine impartiality which forbids the employer to pay to women, comparatively ill-organised, the same standard of wages as men have by organised struggle obtained.

#### It will Suit the Bosses.

Miss Drake gives a kind of cautious approval to the principle of State allowances for mothers and children, advocated by feminists—a matter with which we need not concern ourselves here. If trade unionists are willing to have their wages reduced to the cost of their own subsistence, and to accept State relief in respect of dependents, we may be confident that enlightened employers will raise no obstacle.

So much for the plea of different needs: let us hear the alternative defence. Women's smaller output, capitalists explain, merits a lower wage. Are all men, then, equal in output, or all women? Individual output varies with physical or mental capacity, application, and other factors. In consenting to any standard, be it "single" or "double," the employer renounces the principle of payment by output. In labourious work the output of young, strong women often exceeds that of old or ailing men; in brain work a brilliant woman would compare favourably with a man of merely average intelligence, and if the capitalist were true to his professed principle, would be entitled to a higher wage. In the engineering and aircraft industries during the war, women workers were pointed out as surpassing men in light repetition work; yet employers in these trades, far from offering a higher female standard, strenuously opposed agitation for equal pay.

#### "What Master Likes so much."

The oddest circumstance, however, in view of such an argument, is this very promptness of employers to introduce women where possible. If the difference in male and female rates of wages were proportionate to the difference in output, then the capitalist would be at

least as willing to employ a man as a woman; indeed, more willing, since it is a frequent assertion of his that illness and domestic affairs render her a comparatively irregular, and therefore inferior, wage-servant. Yet no: none so chivalrous as he. Witness the rebuke administered in Glasgow in 1914 by the master printers to the trade unionists in their employ who prohibited the engagement of female compositors at roughly half the men's rate of pay: "Even if it should be held that a woman does not accomplish as much work in an hour as a man does, it is without question that the extra cost to the employer owing to the exclusion of female labour is very great" (p. 33).

#### A Thing to Note.

Mark the disinterested sentiments of Mr. Boddam, who represented the pottery masters in the arbitration case in 1891: "With regard to cup-makers, they are gradually being driven out of the market by women labour, and if they don't care to take our terms we can supply their places with women and apprentices" (p. 37). "At least one employer, in giving evidence before the Committee on Combinations of Workmen in 1838, boasted of using females as strike-breakers" (p. 4). What divine philanthropy is this, which permits such unprofitable female servants to share the milk and honey of capitalist bounty!

#### The Capitalist has Choice.

The truth is, this apology for a double standard of wages is based upon an economic misrepresentation. The price of a commodity is the approximate manifestation of its exchange-value—a totally different thing from its value in use. How the former was measured we saw above: the latter is incommensurable. The values in use to the purchaser of a typewriter and a pair of scientific balances, for instance, cannot be compared. But their exchange values can and are, by the process already mentioned. If they demand the equal expenditures of labour power for their reproduction, their market value is equal. Similarly with the commodity human labour power. Suppose an employer buys female labour power, proceeds to use it (put it in action), and is then dissatisfied with the result. He may refrain in the future from purchasing any more of the same brand of this commodity; in other words, he may employ men instead of women. This he can do without smirching his capitalist honour: he is buying, as his code permits, nay encourages, him to do, "to his own best advantage." But while he employs women he must, if he be an honest exploiter, either pay the same wages as to men, or confess that he buys labour power at not its value but its market price, which the

competition of unorganised women forces far down below value.

Which brings us to the consideration of the second means by which organised working men have tried to defend themselves from female competition. This is the endeavour to organise women in trade unions, and to use the power of their own societies to enforce higher female rates. In early campaigns they aimed only at decreasing the discrepancy between women's rates and their own, but in agreeing to dilution during the war of 1914-18, they endeavoured to stipulate for equal standards, and enjoyed instructive experience of capitalist resource. By successive devices employers maintained so well their privilege of buying women's labour power cheaply, that "generally speaking, it is true to say that 'substituted' women received wages which worked out at about half way between the men's standard and that of other women belonging to the same industry" (p. 89).

Suppose, however, trade unionism to have extended as far among women as among men. What is the position? Only that a woman is now no more formidable a competitor than a fellow-man. But the competition continues. Workers fight each other for leave to wear the yoke of a master; capitalists still use the desperate need of the unemployed to force wages down. The life of capitalist industry requires it. Production for sale must needs be cheap production, and the evils it entails will live as long as the system lives.

#### The Remedy.

Where find the remedy, then? Where but in the down-throw of capitalism; in the organisation of productive forces, not privately for profit, but socially, to the sole end of furnishing everything of use and delight which the heart of man can desire? This is Socialism, and within it will be room for all to enter the field of labour. Then every achievement of mind and arm will be a gain to us, and a part in the enjoyment of that rich store will be our common right.

Let each man, therefore, see in every fellow-worker, skilled or unskilled, man or woman, one bound with the same chain as he; whose emancipation is to be won, not at the price of his own, but with and in his own. Together let them hasten the inevitable end of capitalism and build in its place the Socialist Commonwealth.

A.

#### "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

## JOTTINGS.

Commenting on the ridiculous demands of the French and British plunderers in connection with the reparation clauses the "Hamburger Volkzeitung" (31.1.21) says: "Let those pay who can. Let the conscienceless bourgeoisie of all countries settle their accounts between them. It is their concern that is going bankrupt. The workers can renounce the inheritance. Their account is on another page." Very nicely put and very true. We have been saying this for years.

Mr. Gilbert Frankau, a person addicted to writing novels, is, despite his name, a British patriot 100 per cent. pure. So much so that he gets quite frantic about it. Loving his country as he claims to do, he is bound to see a menace in almost everything. Writing week after week in the "Sunday Herald," he has covered almost every phase of human activity, and sees in each and every one a menace to the British Empire. But writing on politics and economics is not like writing novels. Even his colleague, Robert Blatchford, has had to remonstrate with him as to the accuracy of his statements. But apparently he is not particular as to his facts so long as space is accorded him in which to let himself go. Of course he had to lash himself into a fury when dealing with Karl Marx and Lenin (who, for some strange reason, he couples together), but his knowledge of both must be very scanty indeed if what he has told the "Sunday Herald" readers is all that he knows. In the issue for Feb. 6th he deliberately states that Marx was a lunatic and that he died in a lunatic asylum. This absurd lie Marxists can, of course, afford to laugh at as emanating from an ignorant, but for the fact that a great portion of the working class bases its whole philosophy of life on the contents of the Sunday papers. This being so, it often falls to the Socialist to correct the erroneous views disseminated by such papers. Karl Marx is accredited, even by capitalist historians, with having written a masterly analysis of capitalist society in which he laid bare the whole system by which the workers are robbed and kept in subjection. It is admitted that "Das Kapital" had the influence that Darwin's "Origin of Species" had. And this from a lunatic! It is a scientific study of industrial conditions, and from these investigations the theory is maintained that materialist conceptions have guided the history of man. The theory of surplus value is also deduced, i.e., that the workers' wages tend to fall to the minimum of subsistence and that all profits,

etc., are part of the value the worker has produced but hasn't got—are, in fact, surplus value.

Karl Marx died in 1883, at 8 Maitland Park Road, London, in full possession of his faculties, though he died in broken health, probably accentuated by the death of his wife, whom he loved dearly. Like others of his kind, he was persecuted to his dying day by the Frankaus of his time. But it says much for his teaching when, nearly forty years later, people can work themselves into a fury simply because what he taught has been verified over and over again.

"When the tool arose the tool-less men became the slaves of those who owned the tools." That was stated by Marx, and was never more applicable than at the present day in this glorious new England of ours—or rather, Frankau's—where men and women who fought and worked that the British Empire might be extended to accommodate a lot of gluttonous robbers, are waiting day after day in long queues for a dole of bread and soup from their masters who own the tools, and upon whose permission they must wait before they can use them. If these lines should be read by any of Frankau's readers they may perhaps stimulate them into enquiring a little further into the writings of Marx, when they will easily be able to distinguish which is the lunatic—Marx or Frankau.

The impression that Liberalism and Labour possess identical aims seems to be a pretty general one. During the anxious times of a bye-election when Coalition meets Liberal there is a dread on the part of Labour that Coalition might win. If the candidate opposing the Coalition happens to be Labour similarly Liberals are agitated lest their favourite be beaten. Sir Hamar Greenwood couples Liberals and Labour in his denunciation of those who would besmirch "the fair name of England." Greenwood's opponent, Joseph Devlin, appeals to Liberals and Labour to arrive at some *modus vivendi* to clear the "fair name of England." Mr. George Lansbury, the spotless champion of the British proletariat, likewise appeals to Liberals and Labour to combine. "Let us all—Liberals as well as Labour men and women—work together to throw out this Government which is a disgrace not only to England (that fair name of England, how useful everybody finds the gag!) but to the world" (Albert Hall, 15.2.21). Finally an examination of the new economic and industrial policy issued recently by the Executive of the National Liberal Federation discloses hardly any point of difference from the policy of the Labour Party. Indeed,

the "Manchester Guardian" claims that "the new Liberalism has stolen not a little of the Labour thunder, and has even taken some hints from the Guild Socialist" (28.1.21). Thus all bourgeois-loving Labourites can—and no doubt will—give the new Liberalism their full acquiescence and support without in any way endangering their status.

We have been repeatedly told by those who profess to be our leaders in matters industrial and political, that we, the workers, and constituting the largest portion of the community, bear the largest share of the burden of taxation. If this be true, then obviously any reduction or relief in taxation should redound to our benefit. When Mr. Will Thorne asked the Minister of Transport who would reap the advantage of a reduction in railwaymen's wages consequent on the fall in food prices Sir Eric Geddes answered the taxpayer would. He meant by this that the increases of wages to railwaymen—and presumably those of other industries where "control" has been exercised—have been borne by the taxpayers, and that therefore any reduction should revert to them. If we, as workers, are also taxpayers, we should expect to find the sum total of all these reductions, or nearly all of it, spread out over the whole of the working class. What I want to know is, if a reduction in wages is going to find its way back into our pockets, will any Labour leader now come forward and discourage any resistance on our part to wage reductions?

Even if the worker be not sanguine that he will experience a return of the suppressed portion of his wages indirectly there are yet many who believe that there is some justification for the complaint of the master class that high wages are responsible for high prices. At any rate the bluff appears to have done its work. At Roubaix and Tourcoing in France, where the same gag was tried, the workers in all the mills, including those whose wages were not immediately threatened, decided to cease work as a mark of their resistance to any reduction. If any protest is offered in this country the plan seems to be to stop the job for a week or two on some pretext or other, and then in the interval put up a notice inviting those who are prepared to start back at a reduced rate to give their names in. The real facts, of course, are that owing to the vast numbers of workers looking for jobs and the prospect of destitution staring them in the face, they are compelled to accept. Apart from the quick realisation of profits there is nothing more desirable to the

master class than to have a decent-sized army of unemployed always on hand. This it is that tends to keep wages low.

All the same, it is rather pathetic to find some workers anticipating the wishes of their boss and asking for a reduction! It marks a very low stage indeed in the development of knowledge of the factors governing industry. One such case has been extensively advertised in the Press recently, presumably to encourage others in a like course. It occurred at a mill in Manchester, and the method of approach was something like this: "Your employers have decided to approach you with the suggestion that our wages be reduced by 10 per cent. We hope that this offer will be accepted, as it is felt that the present high cost of living exists primarily owing to the very high cost of production." Needless to say, their hopes were quickly realised, along with the satisfaction of knowing that a strike was not necessary in order to enforce their demands.

Enforced leisure, as a rule, is not exactly pleasant to think about when applied to the case of the worker. But I often wonder if a thought is given any time to the way in which our "betters" spend their leisure time. Do they (the workers) ever read the reports of "our special correspondent in the Riviera," who appears to be having a posh time recording the doings and the latest fashions in vogue among the wealthy Britishers out there? Just now Nice, Monte Carlo, Mentone, and the other places are simply packed with people who have gone to escape the rigours of the English climate. Back here at home those who look after interests are busy trying to dope us with the tale that unless wages are reduced they will have to shut down because they simply cannot carry on!

Judging from the reports, there doesn't seem to be any shortage of money in the Riviera; and all this, mind you, represents profits wrung out of the toil of the workers. Other things remaining equal, any increase of wages must come out of their profits. Consequently if they can get the workers to accept less wages, they will have more profits to spend in the Riviera and elsewhere. Whilst the workers here are walking the shoes off their feet looking for jobs and wondering how their children are going to be clothed, or even where the next meal is coming from, these parasites are promenading in straw hats or minx coats, or magnificent sables costing a thousand pounds apiece. One lady appeared at a ball in a dress made up of

feathers of humming-birds obtained at "stupendous expense."

Think of this, you ex-warriors, when next you or your wife take up your position in the queue waiting for your dole of bread.

The latest report says that black is *de rigueur*—which means no class—probably because it is a colour affected mostly by the working class—when they can get it. They need it most. What are described as "wonderful" silk stockings at £4 a pair are very fashionable. It is wonderful—why it is allowed to go on.

TOM SALA.

## BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

In the midst of the terrible want, disease, and stark misery that the workers of to-day are getting inured to, that they are generally acquiescent in as being a condition of things utterly inseparable from the existence of their class, it is interesting to notice how much money is being spent on various forms of education, and by whom it is spent.

For some time past, prominence has been given in the columns of the "Daily Telegraph" to an appeal for funds, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, to effect general improvement in the organisation of the Boy Scout movement.

A casual glance down the lists of subscribers of sums of £5 and over, as published in the "Daily Telegraph" of Feb. 5th and 7th (to take two days at random) will reveal the fact that roughly three out of every four subscribers are large business firms.

Now this is rather startling, for it is a rare thing to find these "captains of industry" falling over each other to give money away, but astonishment evaporates when the inevitable reason for this "generosity" is disclosed.

Investigation shows that the various sums donated to this movement are, briefly, investments. They are expected to yield a profit.

No doubt a good many people would wonder how on earth a subscription to the Boy Scout movement can be called a profitable investment for these capitalists, but the words of the investors themselves, in fact the words of the Chief Scout, Baden-Powell, himself, will remove any doubts on that score.

Appealing for funds at a large gathering of business men at Manchester, "B.P." said: "We will find from experience that the boys who cultivate the ideas and habits of the Boy Scouts prove more useful to employers of labour."—"Manchester Guardian," 1.7.14.)—A cogent and potent reason, which resulted in substantial

subscriptions from those interested in increasing the "usefulness" of future workers.

To-day, nearly seven years after the meeting and speech referred to, we find the "educating" of embryonic workers through the medium of the Boy Scouts has proved so valuable to employers of labour that they "part up" with subscriptions with an alacrity positively staggering to those unacquainted with the reason for such "free-hearted" stunts.

Another kind-hearted man by the name of "The Lord Dewar" (what a smell of whisky!) delivers himself of this:

Sir,—I have pleasure in enclosing cheque for £1,000 towards what I consider a national cause of first importance, believing, as I do, that the Boy Scout movement is a sure foundation upon which to build the best ideals of citizenship, and the best medium to inculcate into the minds of the rising generation courtesy, discipline, courage, and resource. The results of this movement will be of inestimable benefit to the British Empire in future generations.—("Daily Telegraph," 5.2.21.)

This is a letter which reads at first sight as though £1,000 was a very casual and common gift, but which is pregnant with meaning to those who care to find it.

The "best ideals of citizenship" from the point of view of this purveyor of lunatic broth combine in the worker a keen intelligence in making the wheels of production run smoothly and prolifically, an unquestioning acceptance of dire poverty when further production is stopped by the master-class because it does not pay, and a deadly dull and apathetic lack of understanding of the worker's true position in society.

That Lord Dewar thoroughly appreciates the benefits that he and his class enjoy as a result of cheerful endurance and unquestioning obedience to authority on the part of the workers is shown by the magnitude of his "gift."

There is every reason to believe that the brutal plainness of expression contained in the following extract from a letter is the cause of the writer's desire to remain anonymous under the horribly suggestive and admissive pen-name of "Lone Wolf," who writes thus:

There is only one class in the scout movement, the best. That is what makes it so enormously superior in its results to trade unions and middle-class unions and leagues of nations. And the underlying secret? It is, I honestly believe, practically the only great movement of the present time which has realised the practical necessity of subordinating the personal interests of its members to the needs of the community. . . . Most people who do not want other people taught to think for themselves have some very good reason for it,—that it is easier to prey upon ignorance, for instance.

—("Daily Telegraph," 5.2.21. Italics mine.)

Well, we know who the "community" is. Liar

George did his best to teach us at the times when the railwaymen and miners, besides several other combinations of workers, were doing their best to maintain the already poor standard they "enjoyed" by means of strikes. It was dinned into our ears incessantly that these men were fighting the "community."

Apparently this bare-fanged "Wolf" is one of the "community" and is desirous of having the thoughts of the rising generation trained in the way he indicates.

And yet we find that, through some tortuous and peculiarly kinked up process of "reasoning," the vast majority of workers fully believe that they are members of the "community" that the Welsh twister speaks of so glibly. The Georgian community is composed of people who matter in the present system of society, and the worker of to-day who thinks that that includes him is indulging in a pretty but suicidal conceit.

Those capitalists who have not previously taken a long enough view of the enormous power that can be wielded through the Boy Scout organisation, in the manufacture of complaisant wage-slaves are shown where their interests lie in the following extract from an article published in the "Daily Telegraph" as part of the appeal for funds:

No expression of approval is more welcome to those at the head of the Boy Scout movement than that which comes from business men (28.1.21).

Mr. Wilde, headmaster, Blakely Municipal School, Manchester—a gentleman not prone to making wild statements, writes, concerning the average Boy Scout:

He subordinates his own desires to a sense of honour and of loyalty and obligation to authority. He perseveres, and does not slack off. . . . Surely a movement that is worth developing (28.1.21).

Which is a strong recommendation—from the point of view of any exploiter of labour!

What a game!

In these days the close observer sees that no movement that is in the interest of the workers generally gets a free advertisement in the columns of the Press like this Boy Scout business does. It is not to be expected that the owners and controllers of the profit-seeking (yet "free") Press will allow anything to appear in their columns that is in any way detrimental to the interests of themselves as a class. That things do happen, too great to be ignored, yet against the interest of the capitalist class, is true.

Then subtlety gets full play, sometimes taking the form of bare-faced distortion of truth, sometimes "damning with faint praise," again deliberately suppressing vital facts, and in ways scarcely discernable, the capitalist class guard

their own interests all the time, even making their position stronger by spreading plausible misconceptions which ultimately take the aspect of absolute truth.

A worker who used his intelligence on his own behalf and has become class-conscious, that is, realises that the interests of the workers and the interests of the masters, or capitalists, are diametrically opposed, smells a rat as soon as ever he sees a thing boosted in the Press as this Boy Scout movement has been, and a short search soon discloses the object of the boost.

Penny a-liners, journalistic place-hunters, religious and lunatic sufferers from "scribarrhoea," soon have the grim features of their works laid bare by the worker of normal mind who has used his intelligence in discovering his own true position in the present terribly cruel system of society.

Then does the Boy Scout movement, shorn of all its ribbons, badges, and sentimental trappings, stand out in its true light as a highly developed organisation for the production of wage slaves whose minds will have been moulded to such a degree of complaisant obedience to authority that the woes suffered by the capitalists of to-day (as a result of the workers trying to think for themselves in even the vague, groping, inadequate way that they do) will be entirely eliminated from their scheme of things, and labour troubles will be practically unknown.

We, as Socialists, know to our bitter chagrin what a hard task it is to dislodge ideas that have been grafted into people during their earlier years, and to day we are face to face with a most successful effort to still further influence the minds of the young against their true interests, a fact hidden from the children and their parents with unscrupulous subtlety.

The prosecution of the Boy Scout movement has in view the cultivation of all the "virtues" in the minds of the boys, but never a word is breathed to them about the abominable evil of a system that ensures the whole of their future being insecure until death.

SELIM.

Readers, who find it difficult or impossible to obtain the SOCIALIST STANDARD through the usual channels should communicate with the Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1., when regular delivery will be arranged.

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they could not produce a margin for capitalists to rob them of.

Mr. Withers devotes a chapter to the "Achievements of Capitalism." On p. 129 he says: "It is true enough that Militarism could not have achieved a fraction of its destructive power if Capitalism had not provided the machinery and weapons. 'What d'ye lack?' is Capitalism's cry, and when humanity said 'Weapons for killing one another, and see that they kill by heaps,' Capitalism delivered the goods with a vengeance." He might have produced a fine dramatic effect by following that statement with a repetition of his previous assertion that "the test of an economic system is its success in providing us with a good world to live in."

There is an enormous amount of wild statement in the book, travestying the actual facts of life as we find them under capitalism, but limitations of space prevent it being further dealt with here. For the most part the veriest schoolboy would see the absurdities which bristle in our author's pages, for there is nothing subtle in the "arguments" put forward. Nor is there anything new in them either. They are the old familiar regiment which have been on duty so long, and have been roughly handled so often. They want a rest, and it is significant that Mr. Withers brings up no new forces to their relief. The truth, of course, is revealed in every fresh effort of Capitalism's apologists to put "The Case for Capitalism." They have no reserves, and their case must stand or fall by these.

HUTCH.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### The "Daily Herald" Finds Another Defender.

TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Sirs,—As one of the rank file of the Labour movement, and believing as firmly in the principles of Socialism as any of those who produce the SOCIALIST STANDARD, I must confess to a feeling of despair when reading such articles as the one of attack upon the "Daily Herald" in your November issue. One wonders when we shall cease giving the reactionary forces the cue for attack upon the forces of Socialism. All the more pitiful is it on account of the bitter personal animosity that seems to prevail amongst those who are all at one when it comes to the desire for the dismissal of the capitalist system.

It seems to me it is about time we faced the facts and dealt with things as they are and not so much with what we would desire them to be. We are living in a state of society under which most of us are oppressed; but even the most

extreme Socialist would have to admit that we have progressed during the last decade, and it is also true that those who have been violent in their attack upon the more moderate section of the movement have been willing enough to reap the benefit of any of the stages of progress.

Time and again I have listened to Socialist speakers deploring the apathy and lethargy of the workers; time and again listened to the urge for educating the workers up to the realisation of the power they do really possess. Assuming that the writer of the article "To Heel" believes this, the attitude is surely inconsistent, for it is certain if you cannot get the masses to support a paper that even the writer admits tells a little more of the truth than the ordinary capitalist paper, you are not going to get them to support a paper that believes in more drastic measures for bringing its aims into being.

Again, some of the left wing Socialists that I know and have spoken to believe quite definitely that holding that the Materialist outlook is the only logical one, one must work for the material well-being whilst in the flesh and reject the idea that there is something to follow the physical life that shall be a reward for labours that have been put forth here. Following these statements there come others to the effect that much as we may work and strive we cannot hope to see much if any of the ideals of a Socialist State during our time. Those statements surely suggest that it is essential that we all enjoy to the fullest what there is to enjoy whilst we are in the flesh. My contention is, then, that much as we may deplore the shortcomings of the "Daily Herald"—and I am aware she has many—it is a weapon that all of us who have the Cause at heart should support. I do not need to go over the many things the paper has done to bring to light the intrigues and deceptions of the governing class: they should be well known to all readers of the "S.S." Neither am I or many other readers of the "Daily Herald" concerned so much about whether the directorate knew about the intention of Mr. Meynell's wanderings in Russia. What I am certain about is that the thing was put quite democratically before its readers and turned down on their disapproval. Neither am I concerned so much about the paper's lack of criticism of Smillie during the recent strike—that is a concern of the miners themselves. What I am concerned about is the fact that in a movement such as ours there should be such a lack of human co-operation.

I suggest it is time such writers as "D.W.F." realises that whilst he spends his efforts attacking Lansbury and the "Herald" there are hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children lacking the necessities of life, and it is

no use going to those thousands with a handful of Socialist Ideals and the capitalist class firmly rooted in the departments of Whitehall. Men need bread to-day, and much as we all desire the incoming of a Socialist State, we only retard its incoming by such wanton attacks. Will D.W.F., I wonder, openly advocate that Socialists should buy the "Daily Mail," etc., rather than the "Herald," or would he advocate that Socialists hold aloof from the purchase of any dailies that keep one in touch with the affairs of the world, because there is no paper that is no paper that is clean cut Socialist?

In conclusion, I appeal to those Socialists who believe that you cannot have a true Socialist State until you have made men and women realise to the full the corruption of the present system, that to do this we need a live Press, and since the "Herald" is a thing in being, let us work for its perfection.—Yours faithfully,

M. H. BARTON.

[Impersonally I must confess to my sorrow that any member of the working class should be moved to a "feeling of despair" by such criticism as were offered by me—it provides yet another instance of clinging to the shadow in mistake for the substance. Why my critic accuses me of "giving the reactionary forces the cue" passes my comprehension, as I certainly had no intention of giving the cue to the "Herald," and did my best to make it clear that that journal is one of the units of the reactionary Press, and, as such, was engaged at every conceivable opportunity upon anti-Socialist propaganda.

That Socialists are "all at one when it comes to the desire for the demise of the capitalist system" is admitted; but that does not admit that all who mouth that desire, or who call themselves Socialists, are such—in fact, a great part of the Socialist Party propaganda has to be directed to clearing from the minds of the workers the effects of the work of all varieties of political imposters and frauds.

One can be in complete agreement with Mr. Barton when he says "it is about time we faced the facts"; but it is to be assumed that he was speaking for himself and those who think like him, and the question naturally arises—why do not he and they for whom he speaks do this? That is the whole trouble—they will not face the facts. And when we of the Socialist Party endeavour to make them do so they do not like it and deluge us with sentimental clap-trap about "personal animosity" and the like. We are not concerned with individuals, whether they are worshipped by the "poor in spirit" or not. We are concerned with the *working class* and its struggle for emancipation and we shall

continue to expose all the political mountebanks and time-servers that come before our notice to the best of our power.

Does our correspondent really imagine that the progress made during the last decade is due to such propaganda as he feels called upon to champion, because if he does he must be unable to comprehend the rudimentary law of capitalist development, and as for being "willing enough to reap the benefit," even were there any benefit, the capitalist class would see to it that we reaped it, otherwise they would not waste time and money putting the "benefits" on the Statute Book.

What my critic does not appear to understand is that under capitalism what suits the capitalist goes, and the activities of all self-styled Socialist societies, publications and individuals are quite to his liking and merit and receive his support.

The whole point, which Mr. Barton misses is that the "Daily Herald," like "John Bull," tells the truth on occasion, as do all the other organs of the Press. The rest of the time they are all contributing to the chloroforming of the working class and making it more difficult to propagate Socialism, which is the only concern of the Socialist as such. As for the "Herald" being "a thing in being," so is the "Daily Mail" and the SOCIALIST STANDARD, and the last being the only Socialist periodical published in this country, calls for and should receive the support of all Socialists, and no Socialist should concern himself with upholding the "Daily Herald," but would merely regard it as a daily newspaper from which he would gather some idea of what is happening from day to day.

D. W. F.

NOW ON SALE.

## MANIFESTO

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## THE SLUMP.

Most newspapers are advocating the cutting down of Governmental administrative expenditure and continually criticise Government schemes at home and abroad. These papers say the Government must economise so as to relieve the taxes upon the merchants, landlords, and so on. Mr. Lloyd George has soon taken the hint and delivered his cheese-paring speech to the Chambers of Commerce. It does not require a Solomon to see that the world's markets are glutted—the "produce more" stunt has come to fruition. The next step to producing more is to consume less—and that is quite logical in a system of wealth production which belongs to the few in society. The capitalists could do with a few of the millions who have been slain in the trade war now to buy back what has been produced.

What a vicious circle! Terrible war, awful armistice, horrible peace! Whatever is claimed to be the solution—whether it is producing more, consuming less, economising, going dry, being wet, praying long or short, tariff on goods, tariff off goods, dumping goods, profit-sharing, nationalisation—all, all lead to poverty in the midst of plenty.

We think that the only solution is the common ownership of the means of life, and that all this misery and poverty on the one hand, and affluence on the other, will punish the working class until they see the road to their economic emancipation.

A while ago a datum line was fixed for the miners, and our bosses made out that it was imperative that at least the miners should turn out so much coal, so that industry generally may flourish and make for good trade. But in spite of the miners producing more than the desired quantity, the discharging of workers has been continuous, and it has been computed that there are 1,500,000 workers unemployed. Really, if the situation were not so serious it would be comical to note the "directive ability" of those who strive to maintain capitalist conditions. "Produce more," was the cry; "the workers are not producing enough"—and then thousands are discharged so that they can produce nothing.

In this connection the Labour Party has done dirty work. Most people must have seen the placards with the portraits of five Labour leaders, with the urge to produce more thereon. It would be quite in keeping with their trickery to advise the workers to work short time.

What hope can the working class have of a party that has not the common ownership of the means and instruments of wealth production as its main political objective?

The problem now before the rulers of this chaotic system is to keep a vast army of unemployed as cheaply as possible—until the time trade revives.

Think of it! The workers, according to capitalist ethics and economics, are entitled to wages while they are producing. That implies that they have no further claim than what their wages will buy. A regiment of soldiers, a squad of police, should make us know who owns and controls our lives and destinies.

All that follows is charity—and we must not forget the pride of those who have learnt a trade, and the proud boast that they are free.

The slump is come, and now millions of the workers have a miserable time to drag through—a Slough of Despond—with the knowledge that plenty has been produced, but the markets are too poor to buy.

What a madhouse it is! The newspapers are yelling to the unemployed and others: "Are Dreadnoughts out of date? Stop waste; support the Anti-Waste candidates and so make the Government economise." The Dover election was a good test of whether or not the workers have learnt anything by war experience and poverty in the midst of plenty. Two gentlemen labelling themselves respectively Coalition Unionist and Independent Anti-Waster, have had a fine game with the electors, and it is remarkable how the old stunts bamboozle the workers time and time again—and the result: over 24,000 votes for capitalism to carry on.

No slump there, but just a vigorous support of the system that causes such horrors as we see around us. S. W.

## THE ALTERNATIVE.

The contention that under Socialism a miner for example will not desire to continue as such owing to the dangerous conditions attached to mining work, and many other objections raised in the working-class mind, necessitates a clearer conception of Socialism. Under capitalism danger in the mines undoubtedly exists, and will continue to exist, because the owners are not at all concerned with the personal safety of the miners. Replacements are always available from the industrial reserve. Knowing this, and being only concerned with realising profit, the owners do nothing beyond what they are compelled to do by law to eliminate the element of danger.

There is, however, no matter what conditions of life we find ourselves in, a certain amount of danger to human life and limb, but with the advance of science and its application to the elimination of risk most of the danger will disappear.

## "SOCIALISM IN THE VILLAGES."

This is the title of an I.L.P. pamphlet written by Mr. G. A. Pease for the rural workers, professing to tell them how to remake "Merrie England." The last and most successful attempt to organise agricultural labourers has opened a new and promising field for political propaganda, and the I.L.P. no doubt hopes to compensate itself here for the loss of numerous members who could not resist the charms of the British Bolshevik. For this purpose the pamphlet may be useful enough, but its educational value to the workers is just nothing. It is almost to be regretted that it is simply written and costs only one penny.

To start with, there is nothing in it about Socialism.

Mr. Pease begins by saying that the war has left the villages unchanged. This is hardly correct, but curiously enough, the one thing of vital importance to the workers, their exploitation, which must necessarily remain while capitalism lasts, is utterly misunderstood by him.

There certainly have been movements worth noting. First, there has been a striking development both in the technical side of agriculture and in working conditions. The acute shortage of food and labour, arising out of the war, has led to an enormous increase in the use of labour-saving machinery, and at the same time the machinery itself has undergone rapid improvement. The growing use and simplification of the milking machine during the last few years are but one instance of this. The effect of the minimum wage clause of the Corn Production Act, and of the spread of trade unionism, has been a very considerable reduction of hours, accompanied, as was to be expected, by a proportionate intensification of labour. If a farmer has to pay fixed minimum wages for a certain number of hours, he will see to it that no time is lost, and whereas farm life in the past may have been somewhat leisurely, it is no exaggeration to say that now every minute counts. It is the boast of the new type of farmer or farm manager that his men have to work under factory conditions, in spite of the repeated cry that industrial methods couldn't be applied to agriculture. In addition there has been, of course, an equal change in the kind of skill required of a competent farm hand; the man who drives a tractor is expected as well to be able to do his own repairs, or at least to know sufficient to be able to locate faults in his engine.

Secondly, rising prices of farm produce and

Under Socialism the greatest care would be taken of human life; the mines would be scientifically organised and operated, and every safeguard adopted to secure their workers against all threatening dangers.

While coal remains one of the necessities of the community the knowledge of this will bring sufficient voluntary miners forward to produce all the coal that is needed. Why not? Will not the fact force itself upon the workers' own intelligence? No man is a miner because he is enamoured of mining! He follows his occupation in order to live, and because he was born and reared in the districts where the industry predominates. He understands, dimly, perhaps, that his power to labour is his only asset; he therefore proceeds to sell that energy at its highest marketable value. This he does without questioning whether he really ought to be a schoolmaster or a chief magistrate, and these remarks apply equally to the workers of all industries. Very few of the present generation of wage slaves have a choice in the selection of their trade—economic conditions and the competition for jobs, even among skilled workers, force them to seize the first opportunity. A few exceptions there may be; the ruling class do not object to an individual incursion into their ranks: a Lipton here and there is a successful advertisement for the system.

In spite of red herrings of this description, members of the working class seldom rise much above the subsistence level, yet it is from them that criticisms and objections such as the foregoing usually emanate, showing that their knowledge of Socialism is very crude. The cure for this lamentable state of ignorance obviously is more knowledge. Get wiser! Analyse the case for Socialism. Criticise if you will, by all means, but reason the matter as well, fellow worker, for by so doing better understanding, greater knowledge, and a speedier establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth will result.

As the interests of the only two existing classes in society to day are in conflict, sooner or later the conflict must be determined. Therefore it behoves the working class, being the class seeking its emancipation, to be ready with its alternative.

And what alternative have they but Socialism? W. A. G.

Will members of the Party and sympathisers living in and around the Fulham District communicate with Frank Mortlock, 540 Fulham Road, Walham Green, S.W.6., with a view to establishing a branch of the Socialist Party in that district?

land have been the cause of great activity in buying and selling agricultural property. Increased profits have enabled tenant farmers to clear themselves of debts and mortgages, the relic of pre-war stagnation, and purchase their holdings while the former landowners have been only too pleased to sell out at double and treble 1914 prices, as they have been able to do. The countryside can almost be said to have changed hands. Although he does not understand how it happens, Mr. Pease realises that both farmers and landowners live on the agricultural workers; he sees there must of necessity be a struggle between employer and employed over the division of the produce of the latter's labour, and that organisation helps the workers to get a larger share than they otherwise would. He then, however, makes the following sweeping statement: "But no sooner have wages risen in agriculture, as in other industries, than farmers and manufacturers, shipowners, coalowners, and the employers of every sort, have raised prices to such an extent that their profits, far from falling, have been greatly increased, while the wage earners find themselves little, if any, the better for their rise in wages." One naturally wonders why, if this is true, the I.L.P. does not advocate the break-up of the unions, except for the fact that it derives much of its support from them.

If the capitalists can raise their selling prices at will, why do they fight against demands for wage increases? and why should they delay price juggling until after higher wages have actually been given? Why should prices in Germany have increased so much more and prices in America so much less than in this country? Why in 1914 did prices jump sometimes as much as 50 per cent. while wages had an opposite tendency? The fact of the matter is, of course, that a manufacturer or farmer always sells his goods for as much as he can get, and if a farmer asked 70s. for a quarter of wheat, and imported wheat was being sold at 40s., well, he might go on asking and asking. Wage increases cannot be passed on in this way. Rising prices compel the workers to demand more in order to live; the existence of unemployed will always prevent them from getting much more than the bare necessities of life and they frequently get much less.

Mr. Pease has the usual I.L.P. attitude towards the State. He says "when the Government makes any genuine attempt to control prices it is met by the difficulty that farmers and manufacturers will cease to produce goods unless they are sure of a profit which will satisfy them." What is a "genuine attempt to control prices"? The Government represents the

interests of the capitalist class; it must on occasion, such for instance, as when famine threatened during the war, artificially stimulate production and limit a too extravagant soaring of prices, but can it seriously be expected to control prices in the interests of the workers and to the detriment of any considerable section of the employing class?

Mr. Pease continues: "By combining and forming trusts, capitalists have now become so powerful that they can defy trade unionism and even Parliamentary control." Mr. Pease has yet to show when the capitalists were not in a position to "defy trade unionism," but it is the concluding few words which are the real puzzle. When Mr. Pease has explained how the capitalists have become so powerful as to defy themselves, perhaps he will answer the following question put to a religious orator: "Can God make anything so heavy that he cannot lift it?"

Still, even if he does not understand the working of the capitalist system our author tells us how to end it. "Make capital as well as land public property"; "as long as capital is owned by individuals the capitalist will control trade and industry"; "By capital is meant not only money, but such means of producing wealth as buildings, machinery, rolling stock, mines, etc." What is meant by "public ownership of money" must be left to the economists of the I.L.P. to explain, but the rest is clear enough. Capital is to be owned collectively by the State instead of by individuals. The Post Office is instanced to show how it would work. The workers are to have "a really sufficient livelihood," and the surplus will be used for "public services—and the expenses of government." That "expenses of government" means interest paid to our old friend the capitalist, and if the standard of living is that of the postal workers, or say the clerks employed by the I.L.P., the surplus left for the interest will be big indeed. It is, of course, unfortunate that the postal workers should choose this moment to decide that it may be necessary for them to strike to better their conditions. Mr. Pease does not attempt to explain how the paying into the Treasury of profits made in the Post Office benefits the workers either in or out of the postal service.

Our reformer has difficulty in making up his mind whether the landowners ought to be compensated when the State takes over, but decides finally that they may, because "it can be done without costing a penny. The landowners shall be given Government bonds in return for the land, the interest on which will be more than covered by the rents paid to the State." It is all so simple that one wonders why its disco-

very should have been left to Mr. Pease, who doesn't appreciate the real beauty of it. This will be the position. The "people" will own everything, including the land; they will let the land to themselves, pay themselves rent, hand some of it over to the ex-landowners for giving them their own property, "all of which will cost the nation nothing."

To make it doubly secure the nation "can recover any part it pleases of the bond-holders' incomes by means of the Income Tax."

He probably thought it might not be quite convincing, so he naively adds, "however, we are more concerned with the results of Land Nationalization than with the method by which it will be carried out."

This means that Mr. Pease, and presumably the I.L.P., does not aim at the abolition of wage-slavery, but only at the improvement of the position of the slaves. It will no longer be possible to argue that "farming won't pay unless the labourer is a low-paid wage slave." He has not grasped the fact that capitalists normally make profit by paying for labour-power at its value in the cost of keeping the labourers and enabling them to reproduce themselves.

All that Mr. Pease has to offer the agricultural labourer is already guaranteed him by the Corn Production Act, but apparently the I.L.P. has room for farmers too. They are to get "security of tenure" and "compensation for improvements," which, however, are already promised in the Government's Agricultural Bill; in return they must undertake to cultivate their farms according to the laws of good husbandry—here again Mr. Lloyd George has forestalled Mr. Pease.

In case the workers prove sceptical our author produces the goods—in Australia, in the shape of the State agricultural enterprises of the Queensland Government. The I.L.P. used to be very keen on the Australian Labour Governments, but just recently Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has found another "typically I.L.P. State" in Georgia. Perhaps some disillusioned victims of this earthly paradise have been declaring that it is all moonshine.

The "Daily Herald" recently indignantly repudiated the suggestion that under nationalisation the workers would be forbidden to strike. What they, and Ramsay Macdonald, have to explain is why strikes should be necessary.

Mr. Pease has the same difficulty. His theory requires the Trade Unions to make a graceful exit; it really is unkind of them not to do so. "As a fighting force, protecting Labour against Capital, it should no longer be required." But the Trade Unions will still be necessary to guard the interests of their members." Against whom? Mr. Pease does not say.

However, he makes the best of a bad business and turns the Union into a Guild, which solves a whole host of difficulties. The Guild, however, has its problems too. The Guild will control the farming industry and will therefore require capital; it then "might easily become a wealthy corporation, making profit at the expense of the community."

Having protected the agricultural workers against the "nation," we now have to protect the "nation" against the agricultural workers. How? Oh just suppose it is done, "A workable plan may be found—!"

There are heaps of other delightful things that might (and might not) happen which as Mr. Pease says, "would be pleasant and interesting to picture," but it is to be feared that if the agricultural labourers read such rubbish as this it will be a long time before we see "the country gentry retiring from the countryside" and handing over their mansions to the workers. As I would not like to think that Mr. Pease had laboured in vain might I suggest that the I.L.P. supply this pamphlet to the "courtly, kind-hearted country gentry" to help lighten the tedium of rural life for them? E. H.

### OUR THOUSAND POUND FUND

This being our Special Holiday Number we take the opportunity of issuing a reminder on the subject of our £1,000 Fund. Money is as urgently needed as ever, notwithstanding that we do not make a great splash about it in these pages. Any sympathiser who has a spare shot in the locker should send it to our Head Office, where it will be put to good use in the Class Struggle.

### OUR 17th ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The 17th Annual Conference of the Socialist Party of Great Britain will be held on Good Friday and the following day (25th and 26th of March). Proceedings will commence at 10 a.m., and all comrades who have business at the Conference are urgently enjoined to attend in good time. It is hoped that every comrade who is in a position to do so will show his or her interest in the Party and the Cause by attending the Conference.

### RE VOTING PAPERS.

Any member of the Party who has not received his or her Voting Paper in connection with the Annual Election of Party Officers by 18th March should get in touch with the Branch Secretary, or communicate direct with H.O.

**SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN****BRANCH DIRECTORIES**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jacob, 3 Mapthorpe-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Crickle-st., W. Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jacob, Sec., 74 Murdoch-rd., Handsworth, Birmingham. Branch meets Sat. at Coffee House, Spence-st.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Comtee. Applications to General Secy.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacob, Sec., 78 Erie-st., Mile-end, E. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 How-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Secy., 148 Dalwar-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Secy., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigdon-rd. Schools, opposite Hatfield Downes St.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Weds. Working Mens Club, Glass-st. Communications to Secy., J. Gallagher, 10 Sydney-st., Hanley, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 141 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to J. Lashlan, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Secy., T. Hall, 48 Mayfield Grove, Gorton, Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8, at Exmouth-St. School (L.C.C.), Hampstead-rd., N.W. Communications to W. F. Ticker, 51 High-rd., Willesden-green, N.W.10.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Secy., J. Bird, 3 Wellington-avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Secy., 62 Haverhill-rd., Balham, S.W.12. Branch meets Fridays at 143 Beechcroft-rd., Upper Tooting at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secy., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Secy., 11 Carlton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Secy., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mares-rd., N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS  
LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 3 p.m.

Tooting, Totterdown Street, 7.30 p.m.

Finchbury Park, 3 p.m.

Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.

Parliament Hill Fields, 11 a.m.

Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m. [Garrett Lane, 8 p.m.]

**Thursdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

Battersea, Mossbury Rd., Lavender Hill, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.

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LONDON, APRIL 1921.

[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE

## WHAT THE WORLD WANTS

A VAPOURER CRITICISED.

On reading in any newspaper the editorial comments appertaining to what is known as a "question of the hour," one is continually and increasingly aware of the obliqueness of mental vision, or the conscious hypocrisy (or often a combination of both), shown by the writer of such commentary. If there is any possibility of the facts of the case being distorted or the generalisations deduced from such facts being drawn exactly the reverse of their sequential logic, one may reckon with confidence on the possibility becoming a certainty.

### What a Leader Writer Wants.

The main qualifications for success as a writer of editorials seem to be a blindness to the truth, a vagueness of expression, and a fear of facing the facts of life and the obvious and inevitable deductions any intellectually honest man would draw therefrom.

The writer of a recent leader in the "Daily News" under the heading "What the World Wants," gives a very fair example of the truth of the above statement. To start with, the title he uses, "What the World Wants," is in itself vague and misleading. He seemingly uses the word "world" as embodying the whole of the individuals existing in the world, and takes it for granted that the needs and desires of every individual must be similar to those of every other. He presumably does not and cannot understand that the desires of one portion of the populace may—owing to the basis on which our present social structure is built—very well be strongly objectionable to some other portion.

### What Parson Wants.

He quotes and agrees with the President of the National Free Church Council, whose opinion is that "the most obvious need of the day

is a renaissance of personal morality." The supposition is that what is here meant is personal sexual morality. (By the way, why is it that religious people are always so obsessed with the idea of sex?) Undoubtedly greater sex continence would be an excellent thing, both for the individual and for the race. But supposing, for a moment, that the President had his way and all the vicious people became virtuous, what does he propose to do with the monstrous army of women who now earn their living by pandering to the vicious desires that run rampant in the modern social system, and who would then be thrown out of employment?

### What our author DOESN'T Want.

Here is a question that the editorial writer might very well have attempted to answer; but as that would have necessitated a scrutiny into the fundamentals of capitalist society, it is perhaps just as well for his peace of mind and the retention of his position as a wage-worker, that he elects to pass over what is, after all, a difficulty impossible of solution whilst society remains on its present basis.

### What WE Don't Want.

After writing some meaningless rubbish about the world needing "a renaissance of personal religion, using the word in its broadest and oldest sense," and pointing out very truly that "to the horrified eyes of many very honest men and women the great war and 'the little peace' which has followed it has [sic] revealed a generation as cruel, as unscrupulous, as frivolously selfish and wonton as any that preceded it," the writer goes on to deplore the fact that the virtues and vices of the man of to-day tend more and more to be mechanical products, the conventions of the class in which he lives. "Man

is becoming morally standardised to a degree never before approached."

We congratulate him on his realisation of the truth of the Socialists' contention that the material conditions prevailing in any given society determine not only the economic position of the men and women comprising such society, but also their moral and conventional outlook; indeed, it may be said that their whole mentality is so determined. We are afraid, however, that our congratulations will not be accepted with the grace they deserve. The writer of the editorial, being of the usual type of journalist, that is, timid, conservative, and unintelligent, is frightened at his discovery, and the remainder of his article is an endeavour to convince himself and his readers that the theory of historic materialism *must*, somewhere or other, contain a flaw, its acceptance implying a reversal of the laws of nature; that only by the workings of what he calls "personal virtue," and "individual effort," and "individual conscience" can the world be saved.

The Socialist knows that man is, always has been, and always will be, the creature of circumstances. To-day, as heretofore, he is the outcome of the social system in which he lives. He must conform to the capitalist morality and conventions. The laws under which he lives, the ethics and religion which he learns in childhood, the rules and tastes which govern his conduct and which he acquires in the same way and at the same time as he acquires what is misnamed his "education," are all themselves offshoots of the tree of capitalism.

They force his mentality into a groove useful and necessary for the maintenance and development of capitalism. Mentally and physically, capitalism holds a man fast in its iron embrace so long as he is born and dwells within its precincts. The writer says "The system is made for man and not man for the system." True, man is not made for the system, but neither is the system made for man. Man is born—without volition on his part—into the system, and its workings and ramifications determine his outlook on life and his mental and physical development. He may indeed react against his environment (he may be a Socialist), but even then his efforts are infinitesimal compared with the mighty social forces which encompass him on all sides. He may perhaps slightly accelerate the development of the system, may hasten to some extent the dissolution of what he has come to consider an inherently rotten condition of society, but, in the main, he will be compelled to watch and wait until the system works itself out. Capitalism, like any other organism, has had its birth, has developed and matured to the full extent of its powers, and to-day we are

witnessing the gradual decay and disintegration of what has been, in some respects, the greatest, and in other respects the most brutal and degrading, social system ever known.

Although we can see on every hand signs and potents of the ultimate downfall and dissolution of capitalism, yet the intelligent man—that is, the man who is able to appreciate the facts and conditions of life in their right proportion relative to his status as an individual amongst other social units—will certainly not be content to sit with folded hands watching the wheels of capitalism run on to their destined end. Inactivity is the forerunner of stagnation and atrophism; one's mental faculties must find some outlet of expression, otherwise they quickly become effete and cease to function. By organised collective effort much can be done to accelerate the forces of disintegration working in the midst of capitalism; and further, the power behind such collective effort will gather strength in a ratio proportionate to the growth of the organisation.

Moreover, it must be remembered, the organisation can, by means of written and oral propaganda, raise the mentality of its members and the outside general public to a plane sufficiently high to enable them, when the change from the present order of things to the forthcoming order ensues, to seize and take charge of the institutions then obtaining, and use, divert, and improve them for the benefit of society as a whole.

To the ordinary non-Socialist member of the working class, the present outlook is, without question, black and threatening. To such a one existence must appear very similar to that of a rat caught in a trap, running round and round and turning this way and that, in wild and abortive efforts to find a means of egress from captivity to freedom. Only when he hears and accepts the lessons taught by the Socialist philosophy, when, for example, he realises that organic society—like any other organism—is doomed by its governing laws eventually to pass from its present form onward to a different and, as we believe, a vastly superior and higher form, will a gleam of hope appear on the dark horizon of his fears and disappointments. Nay, more, to the man who understands his class position, who is able to conceive the possibility of the emergence of his class from wage-slavery into the freedom of Socialism, the gleam of hope will glow ever brighter as the erstwhile problems and puzzles of his economic and political position are found quite easily solvable; until, standing on the high peak of Socialist philosophy and viewing the whole intricate workings of capitalism spread like a map beneath him, he will be able, by the power of his imaginative

reasoning, to catch glimpses of the promised land of Socialism, whose actuality is not yet too bright for the purblind, still chain-bound victim of present-day conditions altogether to visualise.

What does the world want? What common factor can be found whereby the people of the world shall benefit? The Socialist, looking at all phenomena in the light of his Socialistic knowledge, sees that until the present system of private property ends, the majority of the people—the working class, that is—will remain in their present condition of penury, sordidness, and degradation, dependent upon another class for their very existence.

The capitalists themselves, although they would probably scoff at the idea, would actually be far higher under Socialism (where, of course, they will have ceased to be capitalists) than they can ever hope to be while capitalism lasts. When there is neither a class to exploit nor a class to be exploited, all men then being on an economic equality, it would be possible for everyone—the former capitalists included—to live sane, healthy, and joyous lives. To-day, the workers are born, they suffer, they die—such is an epitome of working-class life; while, on the other hand, the capitalists live amid a whirl of inane and unsatisfying pleasures, or in a state of brutal rapacity.

But we can leave the case of the capitalists on one side. It is our own class—the working class—to which we appeal for help in our task of making Socialists. We ask for their co-operation so that when capitalism falls, out of the wreck the working class will rise, phoenix-like, from the ashes of an outworn and unregretted order, into a new world of freedom and happiness.

Looking back, we seem to have travelled a long way from the editorial in the "Daily News" to the words just written. How far have we travelled, is it asked? As far as the distance dividing the "Daily News" from the SOCIALIST STANDARD and the writer of a capitalist editorial from a Socialist writer.

F. J. WEBB.

Someone is slacking. There is a copy of the "S.S." of March issue at Head Office that could and should have been sold. Now, then, comrades, what about it?

Will members of the Party and sympathisers living in and around the Fulham District communicate with Frank Mortlock, 540 Fulham Road, Walham Green, S.W.6., with a view to establishing a branch of the Socialist Party in that district?

## FREEDOM OR SLAVERY?

Born in a world that is tainted and rank with disease;  
Bred amid squalor and sunk in monotonous toil;  
Almost inhuman, like beasts that are laden and led.  
Is our fate fixed? Shall there ne'er be cessation and ease  
For our torn, weary feet? Shall we ne'er have the strength to recoil  
From the sad death-in-life, where to live is to envy the dead?

Beauty of nature and art, of fame and creative joy,  
Nothing of these do we know, nor care we to understand;  
Love that is truly love has touched us and passed us by.  
Chain-laden slaves are we, whom our masters can crush and destroy  
At their wayward, whimsical will, with a negligent wave of the hand,  
In the way a wretched child might crush and torture a fly.

Is there no God to help, no Zeus, or Jahveh, or Buddh?  
As well might our prayers be made to an image of wood or stone.  
Hear, then, the truth; be sure you shall find it discordant and crude.  
But harmony creeps through the discord, and a light in the crudeness gleams—  
Freedom is ours for the taking, and the power to take our own.

Out of the wreck of a world that is falling into decay,  
Rise, if within you dwells a spark of the will to dare;  
Come in our ranks and work, and fight, and if need be die!  
We have nothing to lose but our chains. Of a surety comes a day  
When a choice must be made at last, when we break the fetters we wear  
Or retain them still, slaves proud of our slavery.  
F. G. WEBB.

## "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road), on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

## THE HOUSING SCHEME.

During the war building ceased in order that all available man-power could be placed for war purposes. Consequently there is now a shortage of houses. Many housing schemes are delayed because of the scarcity of building mechanics. The Government suggests to the building trade unions that they should receive 50,000 dilutees and help train them, and offers £5 per head if the unions will receive the dilutees with open arms.

It naturally follows that the majority of the trade unionists would be against the scheme, for the reason, above all, that they fear the trade would be flooded. Those in the building trade know from bitter experience the casual employment of pre-war days, the weary tramp seeking work, sometimes weeks and months on end. Can it, then, be wondered at that the trade unionists look with suspicion on all schemes for introducing a host of men to be trained for house-building?

Workers should know that all the results of capitalist production spell trouble and conflict of interests between worker and worker.

What could be easier than for the masters to tell the would be building workers that the building trade unions were against them? In the great war the German worker was shown up to the British worker as his greatest competitor, and the upholder of Russian militarism. It should easily be seen that the enmity of foreign competitors can be switched on to the home field of production with no less brutality and narrow-mindedness. The Government can, if it chooses train as many men as it thinks fit for the building of houses, irrespective of whether or not the unions are agreeable. But it seems to be the purpose of all government administrative bodies to talk business and appear to be co-partners with the workmen for managing the affairs of the country.

Behind all this conferring with the trade union leaders is the power the Government has as the executive committee of the capitalist class, a power that was upheld at the last election by the votes of the working class. With that power, and with interests opposed to those of the working class, our masters' executive can build as many houses as it likes, how it likes, and where it likes. Yes, the style of house, quality of material, size of rooms, gardens, etc., is in their hands. Well we know the quality of working-class dug-outs, slums before they are inhabited, cheap in appearance, and a shoddy blight on a fair countryside.

Mr. G. D. H. Cole writes an article in the "Labour Leader" of December 30th last, entitled: "The Government and the Builders."

After reading the article the Socialist is surprised that Mr. Cole—who claims to be a Socialist—should write of a capitalist problem and omit to put the Socialist position. Not a word does he use to point out to the workers the difficulties and anomalies of the capitalist system of wealth production. He writes against the Government, and favours the trade unions, as though the unions could, if they wish, build all the houses necessary with a judicious recruiting of dilutees. He thinks also that the workers would do well to support such organisations as the Building Guild. If working-class conditions could be improved by such methods there is not much wrong with the world.

The capitalist mills that grind not slowly, but ever more quickly, have already made the Government building scheme out of date: it is not so much shortage of houses that troubles the working class at present as shortage of work and wages. In fact, many who wished for more house-room six months ago, are now compelled to let much-needed space.

Much will be made of the ex service men who "fought to make this country free"! But that will not soften the bitter competition that will ensue if the Government are determined to train 50,000 men for building. A year or two of building shoddy working class houses, and then unemployment! Then will be seen the spectacle of more than 50,000 workers tramping the streets looking for work—and it is to be hoped they will realise the folly of supporting any scheme that purports to prolong the capitalist system.

We Socialists understand that the workers are wage-slaves, and that their position in society must necessarily be a servile one. That being the Socialist's conception of the working class, nothing can be done to permanently better their condition. Economic freedom can only be realised when the workers organise and capture political control.

In the meantime gentlemen of Mr. Cole's calibre can fool about, trying to make out that bosses can be bossed, while leaving them in political supremacy. The Trade Union officials, who have made the union business their life-work and will do their best to make out that the Unions can improve the workers' lot, are a hindrance to working-class enlightenment. It is doubly difficult to point the way to the workers' emancipation. The Coles, the Clynes, the Barnes, criticise the Government of the day, but do nothing to point out the hopelessness of reforming a system of society that is rotten at the base.

By the way, The Checquers is a decent roomy house. S. W.

## WORKING-CLASS POLITICS.

There has recently been a bye-election at one of the London boroughs, viz., East Woolwich, and we draw attention to the fact in order to show the political ignorance which still prevails amongst the workers.

The vacancy was caused by the retirement of that capitalist henchman, Will Crooks on account, so it is said, of ill-health. It is suggested, however, that the real reason was that the new I.L.C. candidate, J. Ramsay Macdonald, had been politically unemployed for an inconveniently long time. In short, that the wirepullers of the I.L.P., seeking a wider advertisement for their quacks and quack remedies, thought East Woolwich would provide them with the political market in which to hawk their wares.

Alas! Alas! It was not to be,

For the Woolwich workers returned a V.C.

Now what are working-class politics? This is the all-important question which the Woolwich workers and the working class throughout the world have yet to make up their minds about. At Woolwich the workers have considered that a V.C., a supporter of the Coalition Government, was deserving of their vote, and once again they have voted for capitalism and its horrors—as, of course, they would have done had they voted for the other candidate.

But again, what are working-class politics? Let us briefly endeavour to explain from the Socialist view point.

Politics is the business of Government, i.e., the control and management of people living together in a society, so in effect says Prof. Ed. Jenks in an excellent little work entitled "A Short History of Politics."

Once again however, we draw the attention of the workers to the Declaration of principles of the Socialist Party, wherein we show that present day society is divided, in the main, into two distinct classes—the workers on the one hand, by whose labour, applied to the nature-given material, all wealth is produced, and on the other hand the capitalist class, who own and control the wealth and the means by which it is produced. The workers have to sell their labour power in order to live, to those who own the means by which alone that labour-power can be applied to wealth production. The interest of the workers is to get as much by the sale of their labour-power as they can. To achieve this result they organise in Trade Unions. Seeing, however, that the workers produce all the wealth, and yet remain poor and are denied the opportunity of living when they are, through no fault of theirs, unemployed, the

question arises why such an unreasonable state of things exists.

If a policy is pursued by the governing class which denies its subjects the means of life, then that policy needs examination. To understand an effect the cause must be sought. The cause of all present-day social evils lies in the root of the capitalist system—private ownership and control of the means of living. In this ownership they are secured by the political power given to them by a politically ignorant working class. This political power enables them to control the armed forces, which are used to conserve the interests of the ruling class. The workers, therefore, have to deprive their masters of this political power as the first step toward their freedom, and only knowledge and organisation can enable them to do this.

therefore, with its Object clearly stated, and guided by its Declaration of Principles for the attainment of that Object, is out to bring that necessary knowledge to the workers and to organise them in a political party for the conquest of political power by and for the working class. It is consequently hostile to all other political parties, and claims to be the only party in this country worthy of working-class support.

Having briefly explained our case we will return to the Woolwich bye-election. Here we see Macdonald strutting on the political stage with his pockets bulging with red herrings. Examine this one: "Let Woolwich give a hearty blow to the tottering Coalition Government and help to put in its place a Government which, both at home and abroad, will serve the interests of the common people, do homage to our dead by carrying out their ideals of liberty and justice, and save our land from the crushing burden of debt and the oppressive measure of new ware." ("Labour Leader," 2.3.21.)

There is sufficient in the above to show the capitalist nature of his ambitions. The establishment of Socialism would mean the abolition of governments, which are only necessary in a system of society where subject and privileged classes exist. When he refers to "our" land, "our" debt, he may be put in the same category as all others of his kind that make use of the same phraseology. The workers are propertyless, landless, and thousands at the moment foodless. National debts cannot fall upon such as these—they fall upon their capitalist masters.

In the above address there is not the slightest reference to Socialism, and the necessity for the workers to organise on the political field in order to establish it. What we do see is a graceful trimming of sails—a careful use of phraseology, with the object of demonstrating to the class with whom he seeks to curry favour,

He endeavours to display his qualifications to carry on, if elected, in the interests of his paymasters, the capitalist class.

Note, however, the ungraceful lurch he makes as he trims his sails for the capitalist harbour, Westminster. He refers to interests abroad—imperialist interests, which demand a big army and navy to support them—and casts fatherly glances in the direction of the industrial capitalists at home, whom he would save from "the crushing burden of debt and the oppressive measure of new wars."

I repeat, not the slightest reference is made to Socialism. But just here I direct attention to the colossal surprise of an I.L.P. expressed in the "Labour Leader" for the following week:

In spite of all the Socialist propaganda that has been carried on by the I.L.P. during the past 25 years, the ignorance of the mass of the working people as to what is meant by Socialism is simply colossal! So our duty as Socialists is simply to continue our work of education more strenuously than ever." And he concludes by urging "every member of the Party to greater endeavours for the only cause that really matters—the winning of the people to Socialism." How the writer, who has caught a gleam of the truth, can remain in the I.L.P. is one of those little things that mystify the man with any sense of logic.

Here is another example of I.L.P. confusion. In an article in the "Labour Leader" of March 10 entitled "Again War," Mr. R. C. Wallhead, Chairman of the I.L.P., states (in reference to the rumoured Allied advance upon Soviet Russia): "The duty of the I.L.P. is clear. We shall take our stand unflinchingly, as we did throughout the war, and demand an immediate cessation of military operations and a complete revision of the iniquitous peace treaties, in the interests of our own workers as well as those of Central Europe. . . . The Vienna Conference with prophetic insight passed an urgency resolution asking that all Socialist bodies throughout Europe should on Sunday, March 13th, organise meetings to protest against the Capitalist Imperialism, and demand revision of the peace treaties, especially on this question of impossible indemnities."

"I appeal to all my comrades of the I.L.P. to do their utmost to give effect to this resolution, and thus take their part in a great international Socialist effort for peace, justice and humanity."

I should like to know in what way Capitalist peace treaties affect working-class interests. A gang of robbers—the capitalist class of the world—disagree over the division of the plunder—the wealth they have stolen from their victims, the workers of the world. Along comes

Mr. Wallhead, and urges the workers to demand that robber A. should be more generous and considerate to robber B. Further, the statement that the I.L.P. "throughout the war" opposed that colossal iniquity, is a deliberate lie.

The three quotations given from the "Labour Leader"—the official mouthpiece of the I.L.P.—should be sufficient to prove once more the utter bankruptcy of the I.L.P. as a working class political party. Confusion worse confounded hardly describes the shallow sentimental nonsense which is foisted on to a public as Socialism—a public which, however, is sufficiently intelligent to see through the cunning humbug of these gentlemen. Because the fact remains that Macdonald lost at Woolwich, and still remains politically unemployed.

Of course he explains his defeat quite frankly, for once: It was his war reputation that weakened him ("Labour Leader," 10.3.21), and he finally consoles himself and his followers by giving vent to the following flow of windy rhetoric, typical of the crafty apologist who sneaks away and bides another day. Listen!

"Woolwich was like the breaking of the day. A cloud obscured the sun, but it is there and it is rising. We have seen it."

What ecstatic imagery! How funny this must sound to the sweating hordes of Woolwich workers!

Workers of Woolwich, learn your lesson! Study the facts for yourselves! It is your political ignorance that prevents you enjoying a decent life. Don't trust others to do your thinking. Study the object and Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party, and then see about joining up to work for the emancipation of your class. O. C. I.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- THE NEW JAPANESE PERIL. Sydney Osborne. Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d.  
INDUSTRIAL IDEALS. Victor Gollanczy. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.  
MARX, HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS. Max Beer. National Labour Press. 3s.  
PARLIAMENT AND DEMOCRACY. J. Ramsay Macdonald. 2s. 6d.  
ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR. Peter Leckie. Socialist Party of Canada.  
THE COMING REVOLUTION. Gerald Gould. Collins, Sons & Co. 6s.  
HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONS. (Revised up to date.) Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Longmans, Green & Co. 21s.

#### THE WRONG BOX.

Strenuous efforts are being made to cope with the problem of the starving unemployed ex-service men in Manchester and Salford. The big firms of the city are asked to organise collections among their staffs, the newspapers publish appeals for 3d. a day from those of us in work, individuals accost one on every street corner with collection boxes, and—we beat the Germans to a frazzle!

Manchester is by no means peculiar in its problem, but, as a fat man in spats said to me the other day, "London's out of date, all the money's made in Manchester now-a-days!" Which possibly is true, and which placed in juxtaposition to the appeal for 3d. a day is very illuminating.

This is what comes of the specious promises made by the capitalist class in 1914. "Never again," they said, "shall we see our returned heroes selling bootlaces on the streets." And you quoted this when we pointed out what had been the fate of the Crimean and Boer War veterans. You even wanted to throw us into horse ponds because we told you it was just the bamboozling of the capitalist class anxious for your blood and energy to protect their wealth. But they do not trouble about promising you anything now. You are not so much in request as you were then. You have to settle your own affairs now. But the pity of it is that you can't seem to realise how you have been swindled. The bloody game of the capitalist class goes on in Ireland, in India, in Mesopotamia, and elsewhere. The clutching hand of Moloch is stretched toward the oilfields and markets of the East—you must deal with the starvation problem in Salford yourselves. You must be the ones to encounter with swelling hearts the queue of destitute waiting in Oxford Road for free soup; you it is who must organise your fellow workers into a regiment of collectors and send them out to beg from their fellow workers. And those "returned heroes" who are in work at, without exception, an inadequate wage, are expected to reduce that wage still further in order to keep their comrades from starving.

I tried hard to put the Socialist view to one of the collectors and I feel sure he went away with the impression that I considered that the spectacle of people starving was a pleasant one. He abused me because I endeavoured to point out the futility of the collecting box as a means of solving the poverty problem. I asked him if he could show me any justification for the fact that the class that produces all the food and wealth of the world is the class that suffers starvation and destitution—and he could not.

The collecting box is the wrong box to solve

the problem of poverty. The right one is the ballot box, and we call on the working class of Manchester, Salford, and everywhere to contribute therein the coin minted of their own common intelligence backed by Socialist knowledge, and raise a fund of political force sufficient to settle all the problems born of the capitalist ownership of the means whereby we live by abolishing the system itself. SMIKE.

#### SANITY.

It often happens after an argument, or an attempt at an argument, with a fellow member of the working class who was sturdily supporting the master class in all their works and ways, that you are told "You're mad." The other fellow walks away wondering why you are not under restraint, leaving you firmly convinced that there are more lunatics outside the mental hospitals than inside. The other fellow, who is the average working man, thinks that to live in rotten houses, surrounded by ex-orange boxes disguised as furniture, to eat as food strange chemical compounds that are produced in factories by men and women to whom the turning of rubbish into food is a fine art, to have every morning and evening both before and after a long day's work a sort of Græco-Roman, catch-as-catch-can, rough and tumble struggle to board an electrified monstrosity known as a workman's car is Sanity. He is also convinced that when out of work, to have to walk about hungry, surrounded by plenty of everything, to watch trams and buses with plenty of room in them go by while he is wearily "padding the hoof," is Sanity. He is also dead certain that to live in abject poverty surrounded by a super abundance of everything, to stint and scrape from the cradle to the grave while all around there is colossal waste, to build mansions and hovels and themselves live in the hovels, is Sanity.

The Socialist is insane when he points out that in society to-day there are two classes, the working class, who do all the work and live in poverty and misery, and the capitalist class, who do no work, and live in luxury and debauchery. He is insane when he points out that the workers, being in the great majority, can alter this ridiculous state of affairs when they desire to do so, and that the only thing that stops them desiring Socialism is their ignorance of the Socialist position.

As the condition of the working class under capitalism must inevitably and inexorably get worse, and as Socialism is the only remedy, if Socialism is insanity, sooner or later the majority of the working class have got to go MAD.

FRED BAILEY.



to you" in working the machinery, but the "damage to the crops" and the "care of the implement." The Elevator (appropriately spelled with a capital E) costs money to repair, while the farmer can insure against loss through injury to you.

The Committee came to the conclusion that a heavy labour bill could be met by the farmer in two ways: "by obtaining a more efficient service from each worker, or by adding his labour costs to the price of his products." It is always amusing to see a man make a virtue of necessity. The second of these two ways means the raising of the price of farm produce to the buyer, which if it were possible at will, would presuppose that hitherto the farmer had been selling cheaper than he need have done; which isn't done outside of university text books on economics. So they took Hobson's choice and patted themselves on the back for not doing what they could not do. "Of these alternatives we do not hesitate to suggest, only the former can be considered."

Besides the mechanical problem there is another it is as well to consider here. The great obstacle the progressive employer immediately meets, is that the average worker has not had the training which will fit him to use to advantage costly and intricate machinery. Even the minimum of education and specialised instruction given to the industrial population has been largely denied to the children of the rural workers, and the war has taught our rulers that this has been quite insufficient. Little as the capitalists like spending their money on you, they have learned that they must have more highly skilled workers to enable them to compete with their late enemies, and particularly with America and Japan, more formidable commercial rivals, even although sometime allies.

The Committee reports that "with few exceptions all our witnesses were agreed that education must play an important part in stimulating the use of improved machinery. We believe that it will not be the least of the benefits conferred by the new Education Act, that the raising of the standard of general education will stimulate the interest and quicken the appreciation of all classes of workers in tasks other than dull routine; and this in itself will lead to a better and more instructed use of agricultural machinery, and a broader outlook upon its possibilities. But beyond this, direct instructions in the principles and use of machinery is required by all classes of the agricultural community." One of the suggestions they made was that instruction in the principles of mechanics and in their practical application to

agriculture should be given to youths above the age of 14.

One witness of a type familiar to every worker was "opposed to the special mechanical training of labourers as it would tend to make them dissatisfied with farm life." What he meant, of course, was that he feared the land workers would want higher pay when trained than they did before, and it is to be hoped that they will; but because some farmers do not voice this sentiment it must not be supposed that they are essentially different. All employers have the same object, that is, to make profit out of your labour, and naturally enough they want as much as they can possibly get; but they differ as to the best method to be used. The obvious, but old-fashioned and uneconomical way is to pay as little in wages as they can, and demand in return as many hours work as are physically possible. The new way—the Leverhulme-Bowntree way—is to get the pick of the highly-skilled, healthy and capable workers by offering comparatively good rates of pay, and by systematic speeding-up and elimination of waste, to obtain in a six hour day a bigger output than can their less far-sighted competitors in eight, nine, or ten hours. Remember, the capitalists control the sources of education as they control all the services of modern society, and they will not give you more than the working of their system requires that you shall have.

It is impossible to deal adequately here with the extent to which manual labour is being displaced, but some instances will illustrate the great strides that are being made all over the civilised world. The frequent exhibitions of farm machinery, and the advertising columns of any farmers' journal show a really bewildering variety of implements now in every-day use, and these are being improved and added to with each round of the sun.

The manufacturers will supply all sizes of machines, adapted to all kinds of work, from the powerful five-furrow steam plough to the handy little one-and-a-half horse-power machine guided by hand like a horse plough of the same size; reapers and binders—to which an American firm has now added a machine for "stocking" or "shocking"; hay-loaders which enable one man on the waggon to load in a fraction of the time it took several to pitch by hand; ingenious milking machines, now no longer in their experimental stage; seed drills, and potato pickers; machinery for the dairy, milk coolers, separators, butter makers; in short, machinery for almost every one of the normal activities of the farm. Before long the traditional placidness of rural life will be a thing of the past, and it will be necessary to go to the pages of the

novel for a picture of it; such, for instance, as the description of the almost impossibly pleasant dairy farms of the Dorset "milk" country in Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles."

However, to return to our report.

A land agent referring to the acute shortage of skilled labour for farms in the West of Wales, owing to the continued demand for miners, gave an account of farms he knew of 140-200 acres "where the hay was secured in a very short time with only the farmer himself and a lad. The hay was mown, perhaps, with a tractor, then the tedder and haymaker were both used, then gathered by a side rake, . . . lifted with a hay loader, and afterwards deposited in a Dutch barn by a carrier worked by a petrol or oil engine."

Perhaps the most striking case is that of the Scandinavian countries. True they possess what is almost lacking here—abundant and constantly flowing streams for water power; but the initial problem, that of applying machinery to the working of the soil, is the same whatever the source of the power.

The General Secretary of the Agricultural Organisation Society had visited Denmark after an absence of twenty years and remarked on the progress made in this direction. "In Sweden a number of huge hydro electric power stations were producing electricity much cheaper than was possible with any kind of fuel. Three of these (owned by the State) between them developed one-third of the total. As a result of the cheapness of this source of power there is a great and growing inducement to install electrically driven machinery on the farms. On one farm of 800 acres every machine except those used for cultivating was so driven. The farmer stated that previous to the electrification of the farms he had to employ for his threshing operations five pairs of horses, sixteen men and four boys, whereas under the electrified system, for the same work, he employed one horse, seven men, and two boys. To this he added the enhanced value of the product due to the smoother working of the electrical machinery and he estimated a total saving of £5 a day on this farm in respect of threshing operations." He considered that in addition to yielding interest on the outlay, the plant, which cost £1,250 at much inflated war prices, would pay for itself in fifteen or twenty years. His own opinion was that before long it will be the exception to find a farm or estate in Sweden or Denmark not so equipped.

Further, although the depopulation of the countryside cannot be ascribed entirely to this one cause, it has nevertheless been a great factor. Whereas in 1851 on an average forty-three men were employed to each 1,000 acres

of cultivated land in England and Wales, the number has now fallen to twenty! Whereas in 1914 there were 693,000 male agricultural workers, in January 1920 there were only 550,000. There has certainly, during this latter period been a marked tendency to put arable land under grass, which, of course, means a reduction in labour, but this by no means accounts for all the falling off; undoubtedly machinery has played a great part.

Now, while a reliable and exhaustive investigation into this subject has yet to be made, there can be no denying the most obvious consequence, that other things remaining constant the use of a machine means that some portion or the whole of the services of one or more workers is no longer required. If a farmer spends on machinery an amount which is equivalent to a weekly expenditure of £2 over the period the machinery lasts, it can only because for the same amount of work done he is going to save more than £2 on his labour bill. If, as in the past, the more keen agricultural labourer could get employment on the railways, in the police force, or in the towns, or could emigrate to regions where his skill was still in demand, then this tendency would not be felt so acutely as with industrial workers who had no such avenue of escape. Similarly, of course, during a period of agricultural prosperity, the position would be that a larger demand for farm produce would be satisfied by the same number of workers giving, with the aid of machinery, greater output per man than before.

Nevertheless, the process is going on and must make itself felt in due course. That this is realised, if without being clearly understood, is evidenced by the instinctive dread of machinery shown especially by the older men. It is only the younger ones who are considered worth the trouble of teaching new methods. It was further recognised by the representative of the Agricultural Workers' Union when he said that "It was very improbable that any general opposition would arise amongst labourers on the grounds, for example, that the introduction of machinery would diminish employment." His following remark that "certainly any opposition of that sort would not receive recognition from the Union" was simply an admission that effective opposition was impossible, and that any attempt to resist would be as futile as that made by the Luddites in somewhat similar circumstances to prevent the setting up of machinery in the factories after the Napoleonic wars one hundred years before.

It is well to recognise the part that Trade Unions play in this. They exist for the purpose of obtaining by means of organisation, a better price for the labour power of the worker than

he could get by individual bargaining. Their object is limited, and so must be their success, for to the extent that they raise wages they invite the purchase of machinery to put their members out of work. "Any action that increases the cost of production provides greater incentive to the capitalists to devise means to reduce it, and results in more determined efforts to improve existing, and introduce new, machinery. An increase in the number of the unemployed inevitably follows" (Manifesto, p. 18). This is confirmed by an instance of only recent date. The success of the Dockers in obtaining their 16s. per day was followed by a remarkable activity in applying machines to dock work, and the consequent unemployment had an admittedly serious effect on the strength and solidity of the Unions concerned.

This is not an argument against Trade Unionism. While the present system remains, that is, while the land workers, like their fellows in the towns, live by selling their labour power to their employers, it is not only desirable, but a positive duty, for them to see that they get the largest possible price for what they sell. It is for them to organise to that end, and it must be admitted that so far the new Trade Union movement among the agricultural workers has shown a commendable singleness of purpose in keeping to the main issue, that of getting better pay and shorter hours, at a time when many of the older organisations had turned into sick and unemployed benefit societies, and were apparently more interested in assisting the capitalists to run their war and exploit their workers more effectively than in advancing working-class interests.

Nevertheless war conditions and the labour shortage, have gone, and the agricultural workers will be hit by the prevailing trade depression just like other sections, even if less acutely and not so immediately, and it behoves them now to find a way out of the unhappy position in which they and all other workers find themselves—not a temporary expedient like the Government "doles," but a real solution. If experience teaches, as it surely does, that there are comparatively narrow limits only within which the Trade Union can function, that the strength of the organisation is sapped by the very evil, unemployment, which it seeks to remedy, they must look further afield and learn the reason. If the system is such that substantial improvement of the worker's position within it is impossible (and we contend this is the case), then it is for you who have suffered and will continue to suffer from its wars and from its peace—it is for you, the workers, to study its construction, understand its stupidities, and its injustice to you, and join us in the

task of overthrowing it. It can be replaced by a system of society in which technical developments of machinery, inventions and discoveries will benefit you instead of rendering your position more insecure; in which education, real education, will be within your reach; in which poverty will be a memory and nothing more.

It can be done, but your rulers will not, and your leaders can not, do it for you. You must do it yourselves. When you understand the system you can end it. H.

### JOTTINGS.

The speeches of the Labour members in the debate on German reparations show once more the futility of supporting them. To support the Labour Party means to support capitalism—the monstrous system to remove which ought to be the endeavour of every worker. Speeches are too long to quote here: no doubt they have been widely read.

The Prime Minister, criticising J. R. Clynes' contribution, thought his words would have no practical effect except to stiffen the German resistance to payment. He (George) claimed that we ought to give Germany the appearance of complete unanimity in this matter, whereupon Clynes went one better by retorting that he wanted the *fact* of unanimity, not the appearance of it! He meant, of course, that they should all present one united front in the method of extracting payment, and not to let Germany see that they quibbled over details. The business was straightened out eventually by J. H. Thomas coming to the rescue and announcing that the Labour Party would not vote against the Bill in order to show a united front to Germany, although, inconsistently enough, he had supported Wedgwood when he pointed out that "the British workers, through unemployment, were paying the indemnity."

Without speculating as to how it comes about that the British workers are paying the indemnity beyond remarking that it shows a remarkable ignorance of elementary economics, it is seen that by identifying themselves with the question of the amount and method of payment of war indemnities, they are concerning themselves with something that is purely a capitalist issue. As Mr. J. L. Garvin points out in the "Observer" (20.3.21), "... the Labour Party, considering its nominal convictions on international affairs, gave last week on the Reparation Bill as miserable an exhibition of shuffling, ducking and retreating as Parliament ever has presented. ... Labour denounces the unparalleled iniquity of the Government, and yet does all it can by these methods to keep the

Government in. Labour's feebleness in the House and tactics in the constituencies are the chief support and hope of the Coalition.

Altogether, nothing more convenient and providential could be imagined for the Government than the Labour Party as it stands, and as it is likely for some indefinite period to remain."

These truths could not have been better stated, and the Socialist unhesitatingly subscribes to, no matter what their source.

\* \* \*

In the "Labour Leader" for March 17 there is a criticism of Lord Leverhulme's definition of capital. Leverhulme's definition was not the correct one by any means (capitalists take care to have special definitions where working-class audiences are concerned), but what I am concerned with here is the "Labour Leader" critic's conception of capital. He appears to believe that capital is necessary to the well-being of any society, that it is only its possession in the hands of a few individuals which constitutes a menace. "No one in his senses wants to destroy capital, any more than anyone wants to destroy the air we breathe. Capital is almost as necessary as air—and because of this it should be as much the common property of all."

As this individual (John Jacks) runs a column in every issue of the "Labour Leader," we may take it that this represents the official view of the I.L.P.—indeed, it is laid down in their programme that "Socialism requires that land and capital necessary for industrial operations should be owned and used collectively." Socialism, of course, requires nothing of the kind, and statements like these only go to prove that the I.L.P.'s understanding of Socialism and capital resides in the same quarter as "the air we breathe."

Capital is a means of robbery, whether in the hands of the few or the many, and being so must be abolished. Robbery and slavery are the basis of present-day society, and that basis must be smashed in the interests of toiling humanity. If the I.L.P. believes that capital will exist under Socialism—which they claim—and if capital can only arise through exploitation, then, clearly exploitation will continue!

To take it a little further, if capital is taken out of the hands of the few and placed in the hands of the whole of the people, then the people, collectively, are going to exploit or rob themselves collectively! The absurdity will be seen.

The clever individual referred to above recommends Lord Leverhulme to get a text book on elementary economics in order to learn what capital is. I advise him to do the same, and to

read it twice. In the meantime I offer him—and others—the correct definition of capital:

Capital is wealth used to exploit labour.

Capital is unpaid labour, therefore robbery and slavery are the terms used to denote the conditions of human beings who are compelled to submit to being robbed, bludgeoned, and butchered through their ignorance of the factors operating within the capitalist system and the means necessary to remove them. This ignorance is not dispelled by so-called Socialist organisations preaching capitalist economics.

\* \* \*

The great boom in diamonds has come to an end. During the war, when thousands of men of the working class were being blown to hell daily, those for whom they were fighting splashed their money about like water. Diamonds especially found a tremendous sale, but like most things with the moneyed class, they soon tired of one thing and turned to another.

To prevent diamonds coming down in price the supply has been purposely restricted by partially closing down the mines, and in some cases closing them down altogether. This has the effect of cheapening labour power by augmenting the available supply, and at the same time keeping up the price of diamonds at about three times the pre-war level by restricting output. As the world's output is controlled by a strong syndicate, they have things pretty much their own way. Production being for sale, glutting the markets is avoided as much as possible. Thousands of tons of foodstuffs have been destroyed for no other purpose than to keep up the price artificially. Under Socialism production will be for use.

TOM SALA.

### PARTY PROPAGANDA DEPARTMENT.

The Secretary for propaganda reminds members that in order to extend the field of Socialist propaganda speakers are needed.

In order to supply this need arrangements will be made for H.O. to open one evening each week for the purpose of holding a "discussion and debating class," where members can practice and learn the art of speaking, and generally train themselves to become efficient Socialist propagandists. Those prepared to attend should send in their names, in order that a meeting can be called to decide evening, time, etc.

In this connection members are further reminded that the Economic Class recommenced from March 31st. Please note.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN."

To THE EDITORS.

Sirs,—

I must admit being still unconvinced by F.F.'s reply to me in the November issue. He says I "completely fail to show why they are so exchangeable (sovereigns for paper currency) if the note does not represent the sovereign." Whilst one would have thought that the very fact that in a less restricted market than at home—the restrictions of the market being due to penal laws operating against the use of sovereigns other than as currency—it is customary to offer and receive more than the face equivalent for gold in exchange for notes, would be at least a colourable imitation of a "show" if more proof be required than the cases I have cited—assuming them to be true, which can easily be proved.

It may help to remind F.F. that before the war gold stood at £3 17s. 10½d. per oz. and the figure just now is about £6 2s. 4d. with the same amount of gold contained in the sovereign as at the lower figure; which means, obviously, that the actual value of the sovereign as gold at the present time is at least 34s., and that would be the price obtainable here if it were not for the severe penalties fixed by law for using sovereigns for the gold contained in them instead of as currency.

If the functioning of our gold standard is so automatic as F.F. contends, why is it necessary for the authorities to impose penalties in order to prevent the free use of gold as a commodity as distinct from its functioning as currency? One is aware that it is an old offence to melt down sovereigns, but previously to the war, when British currency was normal, it was an offence which was winked at, and it was not until the abnormal conditions brought about by the war arose that the law was put into active operation again in this connection. As a matter of fact, when foreign debts are being discharged in gold, sovereigns are not used as the form of payment, but bullion is used in order to ensure that the full market price of the gold is obtained; when the currency was normal this did not matter, but now it is obviously a very big item.

The point can be somewhat clarified when it is mentioned that in Mexico the standard of currency is gold, and when the price of gold advances in any particular degree the "Mex" gold dollar is reminted in a smaller size, and the Mex dollar is now smaller in dimensions than a three-penny bit, whereas five years ago it was nearly as large as a sixpence. The same rule is

adopted there with silver, so that silver coins are of a diminutive size owing to the high price of silver.

F.F. says "the differences in the rate of exchange" quoted by me "represents largely the state of government and other credits of those countries." That statement would hold good if it were not for the fact that in the localities I mentioned so much more is offered for the sovereign than is obtainable for English paper money.

I quite agree that a paper currency convertible into gold on demand cannot be inflated, but that does not alter the fact that a currency can, and is, inflated when so much paper is issued that the gold to convert it is no longer obtainable at the banks—nor even a small portion of it—and as a consequence the rates of exchange between the locality of inflation and those where the inflation has not occurred are adversely affected. What F.F. does not seem prepared to take into consideration is that it is necessary to make penal laws in order to stop folk from selling sovereigns as gold, and I repeat that if the subject were as automatic as he insists this would be quite unnecessary.

As for the note being "treated with the same respect as the sovereign, that is not the case, and I would suggest that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred if the alternative were offered the gold would be jumped at, and if the recipient were a person who was likely to take advantage of present conditions, ere long those golden goblins would be in other hands and have assumed different shapes, and the vendor would be chuckling over the extra pieces of paper currency which had accrued to him over the transaction.

In conclusion, I must point out that my argument is not that the inflation of currency is the cause of high prices because whilst I know that this inflation is one of the effects of the war, I know it is not all of them. D. W. F.

## THE ANSWER.

D.W.F. is still unconvinced because he goes abroad to examine something that can only be explained by a close examination here. All his supposed arguments are bogies raised by himself to his own confusion. They have no bearing whatever on the subject. For instance, he harps on the fact that the sovereign will fetch more abroad than the pound note, all the while forgetting that the latter is not legal tender abroad. Notes can be exchanged for sovereigns at the Bank of England on demand. If the sovereign would buy more than the note it would be demanded. That the currency note is everywhere accepted, and sovereigns are not demanded, proves that the note is accepted as

the equivalent of the sovereign. In other words, the note, being convertible, obviously represents the sovereign and not something less than the sovereign—which would be the case if inflation had taken place.

Another point that has no bearing on the subject, but which mystifies D.W.F., is the high price of gold to-day compared with the pre-war price. It has already been pointed out that gold may rise in price because of increased demand without affecting currency. In any case, inflation and a rise in the price of gold are far from being the same thing, as D.W.F. seems to think. Gold is used for other purposes than coining. The usual method of paying debts abroad is to buy up foreign bills, but if bills are at a premium it may be cheaper to export gold. An increased demand for this will doubtless send up its price, but if it leaves a margin over the method of buying bills it will be preferred. Our correspondent's mistake lies in supposing that these movements have anything to do with currency. The rise in the price of gold has taken place outside the sphere of currency as a result of competition amongst traders.

The reference to Mexico likewise has no bearing on the subject. All it does is to show that D.W.F.'s pet obsession—the high price of gold—is universal. Apart from that, the Mexican practice only results in inconvenience, because it calls for fresh calculations and readjustment of prices with every new issue.

Again, D.W.F. speaks of so much more being offered for the sovereign abroad than is obtainable for English paper money. The latter, however, is not used for exchange purposes because bills are far more convenient. If he means by "English paper money" something other than currency notes there is no point to his contention, because such paper will be outside the ordinary currency and subject to fluctuations like gold and bills.

Next my critic talks of localities where the inflation has not occurred. Where are they? According to his own statement debts between countries are paid in bullion. Equal quantities of gold are of equal value all over the world. Bullion is the world currency for that reason, and its use as a means of adjustment between nations confines each national currency within its own borders. Therefore, to talk of localities where the inflation has not occurred is absurd. The paper money of no country, not even excepting the United States, is worth so much abroad as gold.

D.W.F. winds up by denying that his argument is that "the inflation of currency is the cause of high prices," and then declares that

"inflation is one of the effects of the war"; but if inflation exists without prices being affected there is no point to his remark. If he means the reverse of what he says, he is still wide of the truth, because it must be obvious that had notes never been issued, and instead the sovereign continued to circulate, prices would still be where they are to-day. The banks may or may not have sufficient gold to pay out likely demands—D.W.F. declares emphatically they have not; there may or may not be a shortage of gold in the country. But the fact remains that every currency note issued is legal tender for, and is guaranteed as representing the sovereign—the latter being obtainable on demand.

If the amount of gold in reserve—or in a country—had any bearing on prices, we should expect the latter to fall when gold was pouring into a country. But the reverse was the case in the United States, where prices continued to rise while gold was pouring into the country from Europe.

As D.W.F., however, agrees that "a paper currency convertible into gold on demand cannot be inflated," the question I first asked in the July "S.S." remains unanswered. Neither D.W.F. nor anyone else has been able to show that the currency of this country is inflated. Instead, our correspondent by this last admission, and by his failure to prove that the note does not represent the sovereign, fails to establish anything to the contrary. Consequently there is nothing left but to reaffirm the statement previously made, that prices are high because rings and trusts have been formed by capitalists to force prices up and keep them up. F. F.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY**  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.**OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE

## WHERE RUSSIA STANDS.

OUR ATTITUDE SUPPORTED BY LATEST LITERATURE.

A large quantity of literature now exists in connection with the Russian question. While much of the information is contradictory, and a confused assortment of statements, still we can glean sufficient from it to enable us to make a fairly accurate survey of the general position, although details of certain matters, such as the method of taking the vote, are still lacking.

### Conditions Favoured Bolsheviks.

From this literature we can see what the conditions were that enabled the Bolsheviks to obtain possession of power, and to retain their hold upon it up to the present time.

Before proceeding with our investigation it will be, perhaps, as well to point out that neither Socialism nor an approximation thereto exists in Russia yet. No less an authority than Lenin has made this clear. For example, in a pamphlet entitled "The Chief Task of our Times," published by the Workers' Socialist Federation, he points out: "Reality says that State Capitalism would be a step forward for us; if we were able to bring about in Russia in a short time State Capitalism it would be a victory for us."

Before information on this point had been received in this country, those people who suffer from an overheated imagination, and who put wishes in the place of knowledge, sedulously propagated the idea that Socialism had been established in Russia and that all we had to do was to copy the Bolsheviks. However, even these individuals are now compelled by the facts to admit that they were too hasty in coming to their conclusions.

### An Unsound Foundation.

As to the capture of political power by the Bolsheviks, Lenin, Trotzky, John Reed, and others supply us with convincing evidence that

the Bolsheviks rode into power upon a wave of emotion, and used the customary bluff of the sensationalists to carry the mass of the people with them. In the first place the bulk of the Russian people had not the knowledge or experience to enable them to understand the meaning of a basic change in their conditions. The overwhelming mass of them were peasants, with the reactionary and conservative outlook of the peasant. Their ideas were bound up with the personal ownership of a small piece of land and freedom from the oppressive land-owners and the rural pests, tax-gatherers, money-lenders, and the like.

### Lenin's Pessimism.

At the All-Russian Congress of Peasants on the 27th November, 1917 Lenin made the following remarks during the land debate:

If Socialism can only be realised when the intellectual development of all the people permits it, then we shall not see Socialism for at least five hundred years ("Ten Days that Shook the World," John Reed, p. 303.)

This statement suggests a lack of understanding of, or a wilful blindness to, one of the fundamental teachings of Marx:

### The Marxian Corrective.

"No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have been matured in the womb of the old society.. Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation."

Had the above principle been thoroughly grasped by those who write so glowingly of Bolshevism, and expect so much from it, they would have realised that the new society must grow out of the old, and could not be imposed upon it from without. The latter was the view and the practice of the Utopians of the past.

In view of the fact that the mass of the Russian people were intellectually backward, how was it that such a measure of success attended the efforts of the Bolsheviks? The answer to this question is not far to seek.

#### John Reed's Testimony.

The Russian masses were heartily sick of the war. This war-weariness had been brought about not only by the ordinary conditions of war, but also on account of the action of a section of the Russian ruling class, who wished to come to an understanding with Germany. In their blind pursuit of this object they laid the foundations of their own ruin by disorganising the army, creating a shortage of food in the towns and villages, and so forth. Of this John Reed writes as follows:

In considering the rise of the Bolsheviks it is necessary to understand that the Russian economic life and the Russian army were not disorganised on November 7th, 1917, but many months before, as the logical result of a process which began as far back as 1915. The corrupt reactionaries in control of the Tsar's Court deliberately undertook to wreck Russia in order to make a separate peace with Germany. The lack of arms on the front, which had caused the great retreat of the summer of 1915, the lack of food in the army and in the great cities, the break-down of manufactures and transportation in 1916—all these we know now were part of a gigantic campaign of sabotage.—"Ten Days that Shook the World."

Here was a fact of prime importance that played right into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Just as the National Assembly of France in 1851 voluntarily destroyed the root of its own power by handing over military control to Bonaparte, thus preparing the way for the Third Empire, so the Russian ruling class voluntarily impaired the efficiency of the very military machine that maintained them in power.

#### The Procession of Muddlers.

Eventually the revolt against the war and war conditions broke out and Tsarism, left without a repressive weapon, collapsed. The parties that came into power after the fall of Tsarism, failed to understand the conditions that had given rise to the revolt. Each in turn made the prosecution of the war the first and all important objective. This policy brought about the downfall of one ministry after another.

There was only one party in Russia that promised immediate peace, and made that a

central plank in its platform. This was the Bolshevik Party. The soldiers, the workers, and the peasants wanted in the first instance peace. Consequently, as time went on, they turned more and more toward the Bolsheviks—the party that held out the promise of an end to war troubles.

In the meantime an event occurred which still further favoured the Bolshevik movement, justifying the charges of its adherents against the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries—who were in power at the time—and compelling the latter to place arms in the hands of Bolshevik supporters. This event was the Kornilov affair, an adventurous attempt to conquer power by a late Tsarist general.

#### After Kornilov.

The following reference to this event appeared in the "Socialist" (28.8.20) under the heading "The Bolsheviks After the Revolution":

Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Kameniev, and others were arrested. They were tried by magistrates of the old order, and the trial resulted in setting the prisoners at liberty. During this time occurred the march of the Caucasus Division on Petrograd, headed by Korniloff. The Revolution was in danger. The Bolsheviks, the causes of all evil, had to be appealed to. The prisons were opened, the Kronstadt sailors called upon, and the Bolshevik workmen armed.

\* \* \*

Public opinion came with tremendous rapidity to favour the audacious Bolsheviks, who now seemed to be the only Socialists capable of realising popular aspirations, as expressed in the slogan—"Peace, Bread and Land."

The Bolsheviks took full advantage of all the circumstances favouring their coup. They promised the war-weary soldiers peace; they promised the starving town workers bread; and they promised the land-hungry peasants land. By such means they gathered together sufficient support to carry them to power—the disorganised and badly equipped army proving useless, as a weapon of defence, to the falling coalition Government.

#### Bolshevik Good Faith.

To the credit of the Bolsheviks be it said, they were the only party in Russia that endeavoured to keep the promises made during the struggle for power. Their first work immediately they had captured the political machinery was—the declaration of an immediate armistice by all the belligerents for the purpose of arranging peace terms; the promulgation of the Land Decrees; and the endeavour to obtain food for the starving population of the towns. For the latter purpose thirteen trains loaded with bolts of cloth and bars of iron were sent

eastward to barter with the Siberian peasants for grain and potatoes.

These acts justified for the time the trust of their supporters, and increased the antagonism toward the supporters of the previous governments, besides providing the Bolsheviks with good propaganda arguments for the future. The point not to be lost sight of is that the supremacy of the Bolsheviks depends upon their power to satisfy the demands of the Russian people for means of subsistence. Unfortunately for the Bolsheviks, the bulk of the people are peasants who do not understand the meaning of co-operation for the purpose of satisfying social wants. We will return to this point later on.

#### The Military Pickle.

The position in the army immediately preceding the Bolshevik rising is summed up by Trotsky as follows:

At the front, the situation grew worse day by day. Chilly Autumn, with its rains and winds, was drawing nigh. And there was looming up a fourth winter campaign. Supplies deteriorated every day. In the rear—the front had been forgotten—no reliefs, no new contingents, no warm winter clothing, which was indispensable. Desertions grew in number. The old Army Committees, elected in the first period of the Revolution, remained in their places and supported Kerensky's policy. Re-elections were forbidden. An abyss sprang up between the Committees and the soldier masses. Finally the soldiers began to regard the Committees with hatred. With increasing frequency delegates from the trenches were arriving in Petrograd, and at the sessions of the Petrograd Soviet put the question point blank: "What is to be done further? By whom and how will the war be ended? Why is the Petrograd Soviet silent?"

The Petrograd Soviet was not silent. It demanded the immediate transfer of all power into the hands of the Soviets in the capitals and in the provinces, the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants, the workingmen's control of production, and immediate opening of peace negotiations.—("Brest-Litovsk," pp. 32-33.)

#### The Soviet Not New.

The Soviet, the method of organisation flourishing in Russia and utilised by the Bolsheviks, was not built up by the latter: They found this organisation already existing, obtained the majority of support in it in the industrial centres, and conditions then favoured their move for the conquest of political power, although their first venture in June 1917 had been unsuccessful.

Once in power the Bolsheviks found that the conditions that placed them there were stumbling blocks to future progress. Slogans and watchwords helped them no longer. They had to deal with a population in a backward state of development, a population mainly made up

of peasants, whose outlook is essentially reactionary. The mass of this population was utterly devoid of all knowledge of social organisation, not having had the opportunity of learning the lessons social production taught to the populations of more advanced nations. Consequently the Bolsheviks could only proceed by methods of compromise, in spite of their previous denunciation of compromises when taken part in by the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. That there may be no doubt about the fact that the Bolsheviks had to enter into numerous compromises we will quote some remarks Lenin made with reference to the German "Left," who declared against compromises:

#### Lenin on Compromise.

It is to be wondered at that, holding such views, the Left do not decisively condemn Bolshevism! Surely it is not possible that the German Left were unaware that the whole history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is full of instances of manoeuvring, temporising and compromising with others, the bourgeois parties included.—("Left Wing Communism," p. 52.)

In justification, however, Lenin claims that the Bolshevik compromises were revolutionary compromises. This has been the claim made on behalf of nearly every compromise throughout working-class history, including the well known Gotha compromise of the German parties in 1875 that brought about the collapse of German Social Democracy at the outbreak of War in 1914.

#### Not Exact Veracity.

In the early days of the struggle (October, 1917) the Bolsheviks placarded the walls of Petrograd, and sent pronouncements throughout the country, to the effect that the vast mass of the soldiers, the workers, and the peasants were supporting them. The emptiness of the catch-cry, so far as the peasants were concerned, was soon illustrated. At the All-Russian Congress of Peasants (November 23rd, 1917) summoned by the Bolsheviks, the latter were howled down. Zinoviev could not get a hearing, and Lenin was received with a tumult of opposition.

Almost immediately it was evident that most of the delegates were hostile to the Government of People's Commissars. Zinoviev, attempting to speak for the Bolsheviks, was hooted down, and as he left the platform, amid laughter, there were cries of "There's how a People's Commissar sits in a mudpuddle."—(John Reed, p. 297.)

So strong was the opposition that the Bolshevik delegates, who were only able to muster a bare fifth of the delegates present, were at one time on the point of withdrawing from the

Congress. (A full report of this Congress is given by John Reed, p. 296 et seq.)

Eventually, in order to get the support of the peasants, the Bolsheviks were compelled to compromise with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. A compact was made at a secret conference of the leaders of the two parties whilst the Congress was actually in session. This was the beginning of the many compromises of their programme the stern facts of the situation forced upon the Bolshevik Government—compromises essential to their retention of power, and signifying the throwing overboard of many of the principles they had previously laid down as of paramount importance in the struggle for Socialism.

GILMAC.

To be Continued.

## PARLIAMENTARY OR DIRECT ACTION?

Echoes are heard daily of the various so-called Socialist groups that are repudiating Parliamentary action. They proclaim Direct Action to be the only means of bringing about a speedy and effective revolution. One of their favourite arguments is that "it may sound very plausible to state that the course of evolution will gradually bring the working class to a consciousness of their slavery, but the workers cannot afford to wait. Their immediate needs are too great." Very convincing and humane, but in common with most statements of its kind, it will not bear examination.

It is perfectly true that the working class are in immediate need of having their sufferings alleviated, but, unfortunately, the sad fact of their suffering is not enough to bring about the change. The only way to understand this is to examine present conditions.

On one side one discovers that in England 5 per cent. of the population receives 95 per cent. of the total wealth produced. On the other side 95 per cent. of the population receives the remaining 5 per cent. The strange part of it is that the 95 per cent. of the people by their energy produce the wealth that is appropriated by the 5 per cent. There must be something wrong somewhere.

There is; but not with this statement. The 95 per cent. of society would probably be interested to know how they are robbed—yes, robbed!—of the wealth which they have produced.

There is a class in society called the "capitalist class, which has control of the necessities of life. This class consists of the fortunate 5 per cent. Its members say to the 95 per cent., "We possess the means for producing all you

need; if you will work for us we will return to you sufficient out of what you produce to enable you to go on working for us." Of course, they do not exactly use these words. Stating facts would not coincide with their interests.

Most workers are probably not aware that the means of production, i.e., machinery, raw material, etc., are absolutely worthless to the capitalists until their labour power has been applied to them. But even if they do not know this, the fear of having their jobs taken from them by others of the 95 per cent. forces them to accept the terms of the capitalists.

The majority of "unskilled" labourers work for a miserable subsistence wage. On the average they are paid according to the cost of their production and maintenance. The small number who do receive a better scale of living are being paid for the higher cost of their production, i.e., training. This does not alter the fact that they also are exploited by their employers. The workers' wages, whatever they be, are paid out of the results of their labour. The surplus goes to supply the capitalists with their profits. Now comes the rub. The reason the working class are deprived or robbed of the surplus produced is that they do not OWN and CONTROL the means of production so therefore must submit to those who do.

Does it not appear incredible that such a small percentage of the population—the 5 per cent.—should be able to subject the 95 per cent. to such a palpable form of robbery?

An examination of the working of the system will soon show the source of their power. Capitalism has become a very complicated affair, far too complicated to allow of the personal management of the capitalists. Hence various institutions necessary to their maintenance have come into being. The most important of these institutions is Parliament, through which all the other institutions are controlled—for example, education, the Press, and the armed forces. The capitalists propose certain representatives for Parliament, and the workers, carefully educated by the capitalist Press to believe that they really represent working-class interests, obediently vote them in. These capitalist henchmen—Liberal, Tory, or Labour, it makes not the slightest difference—proceed to pass laws for the safeguarding of their employers' interests.

In the face of these facts, the dauntless Direct Actionists exclaim "Parliamentary action is futile! We will make a revolution whether the time be ripe or not. Since the workers are so desperately in need of some change. We will educate them when the revolution is an accomplished fact."

They propose to set about this "revolution"

by bringing what they term the economic factor to the fore. By this they mean a General Strike. Of course it is a glaring inconsistency to imagine for one moment that a spontaneous General Strike could be brought about, since the Direct Actionists have already recognised that the time is not yet ripe for a political revolution. The workers have not at present reached the essential state of class-consciousness.

But suppose for a moment that conditions do tend favourably to such an upheaval, note what would surely result. The strike would cause the stoppage of all transport; foodstuffs would diminish in a very short time. The capitalist class would not suffer from the shortage: they could quite easily recruit volunteers from their own ranks, or conscripts from the Army, to be in a position to satisfy their own needs. For keep in mind that they still own the means of production and distribution. Finally, if the strikers would persist for a prolonged period, the armed forces of the nation, which are controlled through Parliament, would prove the deciding factor. All the heroism and martyrdom in the world would avail nothing against the ruthless machine-guns and other instruments of civilised warfare, which undoubtedly would be brought forward to induce the working class to realise the futility of rebelling against such a power. An uprising of this description can only add to the misery of the workers without advancing their cause in the least.

It should be quite obvious that the whole power of the capitalists lies in a government that can summon the inevitable deciding factor, force, when needed. Therefore the only logical thing for the workers to do is to capture that government, and so in a constitutional manner gain control of the armed forces.

This can only be accomplished when the majority of the working class have reached class-consciousness—in other words, when the bulk of the workers have arrived at a complete understanding of their position as wage-slaves under the existing system of society.

They will then utilise their powers of voting to further their own interests instead of the interests of a class that has always ruthlessly oppressed them.

J. C.

Readers who find it difficult or impossible to obtain the SOCIALIST STANDARD through the usual channels should communicate with the Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1., when regular delivery will be arranged.

## 'WHEN LABOUR RULES.'

### A REVIEW OF MR. THOMAS'S BOOK.

Apart from other considerations, Mr. Thomas's book is badly written, the sentences are often involved and their meaning obscure.

In many instances it appears that the object is merely to spin words, as example: "Nevertheless, there is still a very large number of people who have not yet gained the ability to understand what they see" (p. 8), which is meant to convey that many people do not understand what they see—a shorter and clearer way of putting it.

On page 7 of the foreword, referring to the traditional British insularity, the author says: "They [the majority of the people in this country] failed entirely to realise the existence of forces they had not actually experienced," and a little lower down on the same page he states: "It is true that they knew there were ever-growing forces in the land, but they did not recognise them as forces." It would hardly seem to be necessary to suggest that what is known must be recognised.

We get (p. 8) a statement which might have been put in a more discreet form when the writer says: "There are some who make it their business to use every means within their power to distort the vision of the remainder," because Mr. Thomas's book is nothing more or less than such an effort, if a clumsy one, from the first page to the last. The concluding sentence of the foreword gives the whole game away, so I will quote it in full. "But, however true or false future events may prove my vision to be, I do assert, with all the vehemence at my command, that labour rule will be entirely beneficent, and that its dealings with high and low, rich and poor, will be marked with broad-minded toleration and equity."

So there it is. When we have that sort of labour rule which Mr. Thomas stands for we shall have, as heretofore, "high and low, rich and poor," with the misery and degradation inseparable from such class distinctions.

In the chapter entitled "The England of To-morrow" we learn that "there will be no profiteers, no unemployment, no slums, no hungry children." This, mind you, despite the fact that two pages previously (p. 9) as already quoted, we are told that there will be "high and low, rich and poor." Maybe Mr. Thomas can explain how "high and low, rich and poor, synchronise with "no profiteers, no unemployment, no slums, no hungry children." At the same time an explanation may be useful as to how capitalism can exist—and our author insists all through that capitalism will exist when

Labour rules — without unemployment and hunger, both on the part of the adult worker and his children, as a spur to be used whenever occasion demands.

It may be pointed out that though there will be no hungry children our spreader of light is careful not to say there will be no hungry adults.

There are commendatory references to profit sharing and bonus schemes and the use they have in making "both men and girls more efficient and valuable workers" (p. 15). We are, moreover, instructed (same page) that "industry would tremendously benefit by the workers having a share in the management." How a benefit to industry in the capitalist sense—meaning, of course, an increase in the ratio of surplus value extracted from the worker—can be of other than negative interest to the worker is a point that is not explained. Mr. Thomas leaves that, as he does all other debatable points, and merely makes a statement, trusting that the ignorance of his readers will do the rest.

On page 24, dealing with the "Right to Work" and the "Right to Rest," we read "That Capital will be entitled to some return will be recognised," and lower down: "Some of the richest men are the hardest workers and are rich largely because of that" (our author is a worthy disciple of Ananias); and yet lower down: "These people" — (the rich) — "will have to work and a proper limitation of their unearned wealth will provide the necessary incentive. *What form their work will take will be a matter entirely for themselves.*" What a picture! To-day these folk expend their energies disposing of the wealth they filch from the workers, chasing each others' wives and daughters, gambling at Monte Carlo and other places, and in all varieties of dissipation, including the use of the daughters of the working class as prostitutes, yet Mr. Thomas postulates that *their work will be a matter entirely for themselves.* So they have only to label their existing occupations "work" and he will be satisfied "when Labour rules."

There is some wonderful work incorporated in Chapter VI entitled: "The Labour Government and the Constitution," and one or two quotations will be useful. "There can be no question among thoughtful people that the Monarchy plays a large part in holding the British Empire together . . . and it would require a very unwise monarch to change this faith in the hearts of the people." And then we get a little dissertation on the Constitutionalism of the King, which concludes: "While such an attitude is adopted by the King the

question of Republic *versus* Monarchy will not arise."

Our author then proceeds to a panegyric on the Prince of Wales which for sickening sycophancy and servility could not be beaten anywhere, and on page 47 he says, "A King of England to-day holds a skilled and responsible position." He completes this paragraph by giving the show away, thus: "Furthermore, the King is surrounded by skillful and well-qualified advisers." These advisers are, of course, the people who pull the strings and work the marionettes.

The rest of the book is merely bad economics and cringing obsequiousness, so we can conclude our survey by quoting the last paragraph.

Speaking of the employers Mr. Thomas says, "They will see that all we claim is a first charge on industry to the point of a reasonable share in the decencies and comforts—not luxuries, note—of life. And I am optimistic enough to hope that when they see our objects are fair play all round, and when they have it proved to them that our administration will mean industrial peace with all the stupendous saving that means, they will be ready, not only to give us the credit for having the good of the community at heart, but will come forward and associate themselves with our ideals, both in home and international affairs."

That paragraph is the book. Let Labour—Thomas, Macdonald, Snowden, Smillie, Thorne, and all the gang—rule, and the capitalist class will have a world without labour troubles and strife and with all the "stupendous saving" that will result. And the capitalist lion will come forward and associate himself and lie down with the working-class lamb—inside it!

If the Labour faker and the Labour movement can be more effectively exposed than by a perusal of this work written by one of the leading lights of the clan, the present writer would suggest that such exposure would be difficult to discover, and the only excuse for dealing at such length with it is that, viewed from such an angle, it has value as showing the crawling humbug and blatantly canting hypocrisy of certain servile flatterers of the capitalist class, who, posing as the champions of the working class, expend their utmost effort in helping our masters to keep us in subjection. D. W. F.

#### "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

## JOTTINGS.

Members of Parliament are complaining that they can't keep up appearances on the present scale of payment. In spite of this Mr. Clynes manages to turn up at the House in evening dress. This has been commented on in the Press, but I see no reason why a Labour leader should feel any embarrassment, as they are quite used by now to hobnobbing with the "most distinguished" of company. Moving in the highest circles as they do, they doubtless find it an easy matter to conform. Clynes lent his patronage to the Warriors' Day ball along with the Duke of York, Beatty, Methuen, and a host of others whose interests are certainly not those of the workers, but among whom Clynes and his colleagues find no difficulty in making themselves at home.

Appeals are being made by Trade Union officials to their members to stand fast in the present crisis of the arbitrary reduction of wages, and to maintain their faith in the Labour Party. A glance at Hansard shows that Stanton, who was elected on a Labour ticket, opposed the increase of wages to Civil Servants and demanded to be informed on what grounds an increase could be claimed!

Some so-called Labour leaders make no effort to conceal their contempt for the class to which they belong, and whose votes placed them where they are. Others prefer to dope their followers, either by bluffing them with false information, or dosing them with religion. I notice that a call is being made again this year for all Trade Unionists to attend Special Services to be held on May 1st throughout the country. As might be expected, this come-to-Jesus stunt has received the blessing of Messrs. Henderson, Clynes, and the rest. Whilst prayers are being offered for a way out of the present industrial difficulties, Lloyd George, Foch, and Briand will be smashing through Germany to inflict the final blow. *They don't leave too much to God.*

Some disappointment was caused amongst the racing fraternity by the announcement that in consequence of the strike the Government had decided to prohibit the holding of the Newmarket Spring Meeting. It is thought that this ought not to be considered a sufficient reason for curtailing the sport of kings. It is pointed out that even in the grimmest days of the war it was found possible to provide horse boxes for the Newmarket meetings. This is quite true. What is not pointed out is that first

class trains were provided as well, so that the class that follows the sport should be attended with every comfort, what time workers who were busily engaged in winning their war for them, travelled to and from work in rolling stock that had been dug up out of yards and sidings somewhere, and which would have put the occupants of the horse boxes to shame. In order that the pleasures of the rich shall not be interfered with owners are being encouraged to extend the use of motor horse boxes and thus make them independent in case of any disturbance in the usual facilities.

Anatole France has been giving his views of the present condition of the world in the "New York American." He has been sadly disillusioned. His point of view now is certainly not that which he had in 1914. The present writer remembers the frantic outburst of M. France in 1914 when he literally foamed at the mouth against the "iniquities" of Germany. So great was his sense of wrong that nothing would reconcile him but military service. "Had they not allowed me," he said, "to serve my country in the uniform of a soldier, I think I should have died of chagrin." When asked his opinion of the manifesto issued by the German "Intellectuals" he said: "The only reply is to fire on the mass without scruple." He now admits that militarism has grown instead of having shrunk. He sees in his own beloved France, even among the mass of the people, that militarism is rampant. The war spirit is still in its bones. He believes that the present unemployment and financial crisis are not so much natural as artificial, that they are but another manoeuvre of capitalism to strengthen itself, to wear down and destroy its enemies, to rivet the chains of the workers yet more securely upon them. "Unemployment, one can see, is not hurting the rich, secure and living at ease on the immense profits they have made out of the war. But it is a clever weapon to employ against the poor, to grind them down into the dust, to drive them in despair into a premature revolt, the plans to combat and destroy which are already fully prepared." M. France certainly writes with a clearer vision now than he did a few years ago, and I think the above is worth quoting if only for the large measure of truth it contains, and because it supports the good old saw to the effect that one is never too old to learn.

TOM SALA.

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**THE BETRAYAL OF THE MINERS.**

Often during the last two years we have been informed by those who, without knowledge or thought, have swallowed and repeated phrases from Russia, that the workers here were seething with revolutionary fervour, and only needed "strong" leadership to bring about their emancipation.

The contradictions involved in such a statement quite escaped these would-be firebrands, for it is evident, even to the elementary student of social evolution, that a movement that depends upon "leaders" shows by that very fact it is not yet ripe for revolution. "Leaders" can only exist where there is a "following"—that is a body or group who will accept without thought, and with but little question, the orders of their "leaders." When the working class are ready for their emancipation the days of "leaders" will be over, as it is only by growing out of such childish ideas that the working class will reach the necessary understanding to carry through a revolution.

Incidents showing the truth of this contention as to the lack of clearness on the part of the workers are continually occurring, and sometimes on such a scale that all except the purblind swallowers of phrases can see the facts. Such an illustration has just taken place in connection with the coal miners.

Not since the days of 1907, when the officials of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (since transformed into National Union of Railwaymen) signed the agreement that bound down the Railway Servants for seven

years (see SOCIALIST STANDARD, Dec. 1907) has such a gigantic swindle been perpetrated upon bodies of organised workers as that carried through by the officials of the N.U.R. and the Transport Workers on Friday, 15th April.

It must be admitted that the capitalist Press has been successful in confusing the minds of large numbers of the working class over the question of the coal miners' dispute. Yet the main points are fairly simple and easily understood.

As is well known, the mines were under Government control during the war, and that control was originally intended to continue till next August. Early this year the Government informed the mine-owners that the control would be withdrawn on the 31st March. At this time the Miners and mine-owners were holding a series of conferences to work out a new basis for wages. Both sides strongly protested against decontrol, urging, among other things, that they should be allowed time to work out their new wages scheme. The Government, under pressure from other "Big Business," refused to withdraw, and stated to the owners that the pool from which the profits had been paid was empty. Despite this the Government offered to guarantee to pay nine-tenths of the average rate of profits for March, even though prices fell, if the owners would drop their opposition to decontrol.

The owners accepted this bribe, or subsidy, from the national funds, as subsidies are only harmful or "uneconomic" when given to the workers, and then announced that as soon as control ceased all the agreements made between the Miners and the Government would be scrapped and wages placed upon an economic basis. They kept their word, and as soon as the De-Control Bill was passed notices were issued terminating all existing agreements, to every section of the Colliery Workers, INCLUDING THE PUMP AND ENGINE MEN.

This notice was to expire on the 31st March, and in the meantime the masters issued a new scale of wages, involving huge reductions in several areas, reaching in some cases as much as £1 15s. per week. From the owners' point of view everything looked favourable. Thanks to "Making Germany Pay" the French coal market was flooded with German coal and English coal was driven out. In practically every industry there were large numbers of unemployed that would seriously reduce the financial assistance they could give the Miners, while the latter's own funds had been almost exhausted—except for the amounts necessary to pay the officials—by the strike of last year.

Despite all these advantages the owners were

disagreeably surprised to find the Miners were solid in refusing to accept the new terms. So the men were locked out. Then the capitalist Press was set to work to shriek at the wicked pump and engine men, who, being locked out, had the audacity to stay away from work!

Immediately the "leaders" of the Miners' Federation made two big blunders. The first one was to admit that a reduction of wages was necessary—a statement which was entirely false—and the second was to lay down as a "principle" a National Pooling Scheme.

The first point hardly needs discussing. The workers may be forced to accept reductions of wages under certain conditions, but in no case is such a reduction necessary. Clearly the first call upon any branch of production should be the maintenance of those doing the work. Wages fluctuate around the cost of subsistence, and as there is not a single division of industry where the wages are equal in purchasing power to pre war level, the claim of the masters for a reduction of wages is just a brazen attempt to lower the already poor standard of subsistence. For Trade Unions officials to chatter about a reduction of wages being necessary is to show either a colossal ignorance of the workers' position as wage slaves or a readiness to betray their members in the masters' interests.

The second point was a conceited attempt on the part of the Miners' officials to show their ability to assist the owners out of their difficulties. Obviously it is no part of the business of Trade Unions officials to instruct employers how to manage their business. They are not paid large salaries by the workers for that purpose, and the Miners' officials were acting falsely to the people who pay them by such actions. It is for the mine-owners to settle their own method of payment, whether by pool or person. The putting forward of the "Pool" scheme has been of great value to the mine-owners and the Government in diverting the attention of both Miners and other workers from the real point at issue—the lowering of the standard of existence.

When in 1914 the Miners joined up with the Railwaymen and the Transport Workers in a loose federation called the Triple Alliance, for the purpose of defence against just such action as that now being taken by the mine owners, it was hailed by all the "Direct Actionists" and "economic power" phrasers as the greatest step forward the workers had ever taken. Although each of the constituent bodies forming the Alliance have, at different times, been engaged in hard fights with the masters, some excuse has always been forthcoming to explain why the Alliance should not use its power to assist such body. Now it was going to show this power.

After several meetings it was decided on 8th April that unless negotiations were re-opened between the Miners and the mine owners the Railway and Transport workers would be called out at midnight of the 12th April. Having reached this decision Messrs. Thomas, Cramp, Abraham, Bevin, Gosling, Sexton, and R. Williams were formed into a deputation to carry on negotiations between the Government and the Miners' Executive.

Late on Saturday night, April 9th, the latter agreed to issue a notice calling upon their members not to interfere with volunteers working the pumps and engines, and upon this condition a meeting between the Miners and owners was fixed for the Monday morning. On this arrangement the strike dated for Tuesday night was called off.

The meeting was a failure. No agreement was reached and the Miners, faced with essentially the same situation as before, left the Conference. Then the Executives of the Triple Alliance called another strike for Friday, 15th April, at 10 p.m.

This was to be "the thing." No more dallying, nor more shuffling or wasting of time, but a strong and determined blow against aggression.

The blow came all right, but to the utter amazement and confusion of the rank and file it was a blow by the Executives of the N.U.R. and the Transport workers against the Miners. They had decided to CANCEL THE STRIKE.

Seldom has such treachery been exposed in the industrial field. It was a complete betrayal of the Miners by their own associates—so much so that officials of the N.U.R. and the Transport workers dared not meet their own rank and file and abandoned scores of meetings that had been called for Friday night by skulking out of the way.

From every side arose demands for "explanations," and when those "explanations" that were published are examined the sinister aspect of the situation shows clearly through the veil of confusion with which the officials try to cover up the truth.

All through the negotiations the Miners—quite wrongly, as we have shown above—had held rigidly to the "principle" of a National Pool being accepted, before discussing details. The Triple Alliance officials were, of course, not only well aware of this, but had supported the Miner's claim for this "principle."

On Thursday night (14th April) Mr. F. Hodges, Secretary of the Miners' Federation, announced to a more or less private meeting of members of Parliament, in the House of Commons, that the Miners would be prepared to discuss details of wages reduction and defer the

question of the National Pool. Lloyd George at once made arrangements for a meeting of Miners and mine-owners on the Friday morning. But on Friday morning the Miners' Executive repudiated Mr. Hodges' offer, and declined to go to the meeting. When the officials of the N.U.R. and the Transport Workers were informed of this decision they passed the resolution cancelling the strike.

The defence put forward by these officials for this decision—that the Miners should have accepted the offer to meet the owners—is simply idiotic as an argument. As stated above, they knew and approved of the Miners' attitude on the "pool" all through the dispute, and their peevish excuse but exposes the more clearly the sinister character of their action.

It would be an insult to the intelligence of any normal person, and still more so to that of Mr. Hodges, to suggest, as does the "Daily Herald" (16th April), that Hodges "made a tactical mistake." This cool and cunning Labour "leader" knows the views of the Miners and the case he has been handling far too well for such an hypothesis to bear a moment's examination. The "Labour Leader" and the official organ of the several times united Communist Party join in putting the bulk of the blame upon J. H. Thomas, but this condemnation proceeds from a desire to make him a scape-goat for the actions of members of the I.L.P. like Sexton and of the Communist Party like R. Williams, who are not one whit less guilty than Thomas.

The only explanation that fits the facts of the case we have given above is that the whole business has been arranged among the wire-pulling clique of Labour leaders who had the matter in hand, and it is merely misleading the workers to pretend that any one of the clique is more guilty in any material sense than the others. Nor can the Executive of the Miners' Federation escape from their share in the foul business. When they met on Friday morning to consider Hodges' offer of the previous night they decided by a majority of two ("Observer," 17.4.1921.) to repudiate that offer. But this majority contains the pets of the Communist Party, the "extremists" like G. Barker. Had they the slightest grasp of essentials they would have at once called for Mr. Hodges' dismissal. Not only did the "extremists" fail to take such action, but they voted for the resolution asking Hodges to retain office! (See Mr. Hodges' letter in the "Observer," 17.4.1921.) The whole evidence supports the contention that the meeting in the House of Commons had been carefully arranged to allow the Triple Alliance to crawl out of the situation the strike threat had created.

The whole incident, with its huge fraud and slimy crawling on the part of the officials of the unions concerned, throws a flood of light on the present mental condition of the organised workers. It shows the fallacy of the Anarchist and Industrial Unionist argument that political action is no good because it corrupts the representatives of the workers. They will be puzzled to find an equal in politics to this act of corruption—one among thousands—on the industrial field. It shows once again the stupidity of allowing "leaders" to decide agreements and actions.

Above all it shows how few of the working class here have even a glimmering of an understanding of their slave position when they allow themselves to be used as pawns in the intrigues and corrupt practices of their officials.

All along the line the employers are making a powerful and systematic attempt to lower the standard of existence of the working class. Engineers, shipbuilders, transport workers, miners, house builders, seamen, are all being attacked, and in each case the officials are urging the workers to accept the masters' terms, though to save their faces—and their jobs—they usually introduce some small modification as a point to argue about. Had the rank and file of the Triple Alliance understood even their ordinary Trade Union interests they would have stood together and fought to the fullest extent of their power against this attempt to worsen their conditions. A short time ago the Building Trades Federation urged joint action on the part of all organised workers against the plot of the employers, but the mandarins of the Triple Alliance evaded the question by referring it to the Cremation Company known as the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Unions Congress.

This ignorance extends to some who pretend that they understand Socialism because they can shout loudly. Thus in the "Communist" of 2nd April appears the following:

Only by taking the offensive, only by a well-calculated, well-organised and capably developed campaign for the nationalisation of the mines with real and complete workers' control can the miners ever score any real victory over their exploiters.

Even the beginner in the study of Socialism is aware that Nationalisation is merely capitalist control through the agency of the Government instead of an individual or group. To expect the capitalists to allow the workers "real and complete" control under nationalisation is idiotic. The sapient guides are therefore urging the Miners to organise a campaign for—more centralised capitalist control!

These people also howl against the present Trade Union "leaders." Not because the existence of "leaders" proves how unripe the workers are for Socialism, but merely because

they are "bad" leaders. Thus in their issue of 9th April one reads:

Out of the hands of the reformists must power be taken and into the hands of those who see straight and clearly must power go.

Into the hands of those who "see straight" like R. Williams, we suppose.

To follow "leaders," no matter who they are, or whether on the industrial field or the political, is to give those "leaders" something to sell—their influence over the members. Evidently there is competition for these leaderships and the crime appears to be that Bevin, Thomas, Clynes, Hodges, and so on, hold these jobs instead of those who "see straight," like the Communists. Such teaching is just as misleading as that of the present office holders.

The working class are slaves because all the means of production and distribution—land, mines, minerals, railways, canals, factories, motors, engines, machinery, docks, warehouses and the like—are owned by a small section in society—the capitalist or master class. The workers cannot operate these means of production and distribution without the masters' permission, in other words the workers only live by permission of the masters. This is the first great fact the workers have to learn. The second is how do the masters retain their control?

The present struggle once more repeated the thousand times told tale. Leaving their "economic power" to look after itself, the capitalists had the Army reserves called up, Naval ratings sent to work the pumps, a white guard formed called a "Defence Force," and set the new D.O.R.A. into operation.

"Oh!" we shall be told, "but that was the work of the Government." Exactly, and who are the Government? Perhaps the answer may not come quite so readily. A little thought will show that the Government is merely the Executive Committee of Parliament, and it can be pulled up, reprimanded, or changed whenever the majority decide to do any of these things. That majority to day consists of capitalists and capitalists' agents. Thus the Government is in reality the Executive Committee of the capitalist class—which explains a large number of things if one thinks over it. An inquisitive person may ask: "Who sends that majority to Parliament?" and if he happened to be a person ignorant of the workings of capitalism, he would be staggered to receive the reply—"The workers—miners, transport workers, railwaymen, engineers, builders, labourers, clerks, in short, all those who do the useful work of society."

There stands the bald fact. It is the workers themselves, in their ignorance, who place the

power into the hands of the master class whereby the latter enslave the former. While the workers continue to vote the masters into control of the political machinery their slavery will continue and their conditions grow worse.

Out of this situation the road stands clear. Not by wild grimaces or hysterical shrieks, not by rushing unarmed against machine guns and high explosive shells, not by stupidly imagining they can "lock-out" the master class by economic organisation, but by first studying their position in society to-day, and when they have discovered how they are enslaved, organising seize control of political power, through the franchise they possess. When they have attained possession of the political power, and not till then, they will be able to take over the means of life and end strikes, lock-outs, and the treachery of officials by establishing Socialism as the form of society fitting the development of the means of production.

## "THE TRIUMPH OF NATIONALIZATION."

By Sir Leo Chiozza Money. London: Cassell & Co. 7s. 6d.

The author of this book contends that but for Government activity the necessary supply of munitions and ordinary commodities could not have been maintained during the war, and to prove this he produces a vast mass of facts and figures, which he had excellent opportunities for collecting, showing how Government organisation succeeded where private enterprise failed.

It is with his conclusions rather than his figures that we are concerned. We agree with all he says about the increased productivity consequent on the swift development of machine production, and his admission that there has been no appreciable improvement in the lot of the worker in spite of it.

Already in "Poverty and Riches" our author has shown the existence of great wealth and great poverty side by side, yet he still does not, or will not, see that this is inherent in capitalism. He thinks, or at least he says, that mismanagement is at the root of the trouble, and that with better organisation, and without serious interference with the basis of society, the problem of poverty can be solved.

Sir Leo, although he has changed his political party, is still a politician with a "career" and a "reputation" to consider, and this prevents his demanding, with us, a fundamental reconstruction of society. Capitalism is based upon the robbery of the employed by the employing class; from that the poverty and degradation

of the working class springs, and this it is which renders futile the suggested renovation of the old structure.

Compare our explanation of the existence of poverty with the eight reasons put forward by Sir Leo, who does not see that they are all traceable to one cause. His points are as follows:

- (1) The divorce from production of an increasing proportion of workers.
- (2) The poor technical equipment of many producers.
- (3) The defective organisation of producers.
- (4) The waste of work in competition.
- (5) The production of rubbish.
- (6) The production of luxuries.
- (7) Physical deterioration.
- (8) The lack of scientific education.

Owing to improved methods and the fact that goods are produced for sale only to those who can pay for them, and not for use by all who need them, a decrease in the number of workers actually producing necessities is inevitable.

Poor equipment there certainly is, but that is a question for the producer, who introduces up-to-date machinery and methods only if, and to the extent that, the immediate object of producing profit is concerned, and not for the worker, whose wages are not affected. Again, the anomalies produced by competition, which the growth of the combine will remove, should not be any concern of the workers. Will the removal of the absurdity of a thousand different types of plough by standardisation get better pay for the ploughman? As many workers live by the wastefulness of capitalism and can have no interest in economy, is it for them to assist the master class to exploit them more efficiently? The production of rubbish and luxuries just as much as the production of necessities allows the employer to make profit and the worker to earn wages, and, this being all they are interested in, they are equally indifferent to the eventual use of the product.

Physical deterioration, undoubtedly very alarming, is not the cause of poverty, as Sir Chiozza Money would have us believe, but is caused by it. Like the lack of scientific education, it results from the condition of present-day society itself, and the following statement by Prof. D. J. Cunningham serves to show that it could easily and rapidly be remedied: "In spite of the marked variations which are seen in the physique of the different classes of people in Great Britain, . . . those inferior bodily characteristics which are the result of poverty (not of vice such as syphilis and alcoholism) . . . are not transmissible from one generation to another." The capitalist controls the means of

health and education and will not give them to the workers unless it is necessary to do so for their continued exploitation.

#### THE WAR.

When the war broke out the capitalists were interested, as they always are, in making profits; and "patriotism" was not enough to prevent their exporting oil seeds, nuts, fats, tea, etc. to the "enemy" and producing poor quality munitions at fabulous prices. The Government, discovering that wars are not won in this way, competed in their own factories with private producers. Thus, on such things as T.N.T., 18-pounder shells, and machine guns, anything from 50 per cent. to 75 per cent. of the prices quoted by these patriots was saved. The Government's system of costing alone saved £440,000,000. When we consider how many contractors have made fortunes out of this we can understand the bitter hostility of them and the newspapers which serve them to any kind of State production.

Compare the patriotism of the employing class, whose interests were bound up in victory, with that of the workers who had nothing to gain. When the latter asked for increases commensurate with the rise in the cost of living, they were threatened with coercion, backed of course by friend Henderson of the Labour Party. Within ten days of the staying of the German advance in the spring of 1918 the National Union of Manufacturers had a deputation waiting upon Lloyd George asking for the removal of restrictions on their profit-making.

It is impossible even to catalogue here all the Government's activities in different branches of production, one can only say that they are faithfully recorded in Sir Leo's book. He gives a conception of the potentialities of properly co-ordinated production, carried on by trained men, backed by the resources of the State, able to engage in scientific research under ideal conditions, and offers the immediate possibility of a five-hour working day under the proper organisation of even existing forces.

Although proving the efficiency of State owned concerns so conclusively, our author does not show how nationalisation is of any benefit to the workers. State organisation may eliminate waste, but will it put an end to the robbery of the workers, the root of present evils?

In "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," Engels long ago sketched the inevitable tendency towards State ownership and trustification, of which two remarkable instances are given in this book—the merging of the 700 banks of a century ago into the present 29, of whose deposits five hold two-thirds; and the fact that in 1914-1915 £400,000,000 out of the

£613,000,000 total profits of business went to public companies as distinct from private firms. But Engels wrote thus of the point on which our author is silent: "In any case . . . the official representative of Capitalist Society—the State, will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production. But the transition either into Joint Stock Companies and Trusts, or into State ownership, does not do away with the Capitalist nature of the productive forces. The workers must remain wage workers, proletarians. The Capitalist relation is not done away with yet. It is rather brought to a head."

There comes a time in the growth of trustification where control can no longer be left in the hands of private persons, and the State is compelled, often in the interests of other capitalists, to step in and take control. The National Liberal Federation is recognising this. Exploitation continues, however, and becomes, owing to centralisation and improved administration, more intense than before.

Production being now carried on from top to bottom by paid servants, the capitalist is left without the pretence of useful service. The way is then clear for the workers to gain political power and organise production for use, for selves, the producers.

In short, our criticism of Sir Leo's book is this: He proclaims the intention of demonstrating the superiority of Nationalisation over private enterprise. He succeeds, but omits to point out that Nationalisation is private ownership in another form. He proves that the State can produce with extraordinary efficiency and economy as compared with the present idiotic competitive method, but does not trouble to enlighten us as to the inevitable effect of this on the workers.

The benefit of reduction of waste will be reaped by those who own the machinery of production and consequently the products. Whether these owners be private employers or the capitalist class owning collectively through the State does not materially alter the position. The workers are still wage earners; they are still robbed. While the wage relation remains—and Sir Leo does not even consider the possibility of removing it—the workers can have no vital interest in promoting technical and administrative improvements. The task before them is that of obtaining for their own use the means of production. When that has been done will be time enough for them to consider how best to use them.

Sir Leo, however, evades the question of ownership and deliberately confuses the issue by such nonsensical phrases as "Socialism in Wool," the "Socialist Police Force," and "Socialist currency," and by the note appear-

ing in the index to "see under Nationalisation," for information about Socialism. He endeavours to convey to the reader the impression that "Nationalisation"—that is, the centralisation of ownership by the capitalist class through the State—and Socialism—the expropriation of that class—are one and the same thing.

With a wealth of material at his command, Sir Leo fails to prove his case to the workers. The material can be used by us, but the book should be called "The Triumph of Organisation,"—it means nothing more. H.

#### LABOUR AND LAND.

It is often difficult enough to discover what really is the attitude of the Labour Party toward any particular problem; although its general policy of assisting the capitalists to govern, while endeavouring to win the "New Jerusalem" a brick at a time is perfectly plain—and perfectly fatuous. Not recognising the existence of the conflict of interests between the two classes of modern society, it wholly lacks a guiding principle. It is in effect, as also in the intention of many of its leaders, merely the "official Opposition," waiting to get into power, but without the least idea of interfering with the system which will have enabled its prominent men to reach positions of eminence. As in order to obtain this end, it is prepared to adopt any programme circumstances may suggest from time to time, it has succeeded in bringing together a remarkable assortment of political odds and ends. Any decided line of action would be certain to offend some element of the party, so the safest course for its spokesmen is to say what they must say as vaguely as possible, and leave it to friends and enemies to interpret as they choose.

The least ambiguous, as the most shameful, action ever taken by the Labour Party was its enthusiastic support of Capital's crowning glory, the war; but even Mr. Patrick Lawrence could say when challenged to defend that attitude "but they didn't all support it."

It was not until after the Liberals had issued their manifesto on Ireland that Mr. Henderson defined the Labour Party's position; and what was it? The two were as like as a common purpose—vote catching—would lead one to expect, and as different in appearance as studied indefiniteness could make them.

At that time criticism of the Government's activities in Ireland had become sufficiently popular to make this a sound plank for every bye-election platform of both parties. The decision not to oppose the Second Reading of

the Reparation Bill, followed by a vote against the Government on the Third Reading is another case in point.

This lack of clearness, of which numerous instances can readily be found, extends to what is called the "agricultural problem," but in the March issue of the "Nineteenth Century" is an article by Mr. W. R. Smith, M.P., President of the National Union of Agricultural Workers, which is an important suggestion, if not an official statement, of the party's policy.

It is prefaced by a very naive editorial comment which is too good to be passed over. "People who have lived on the land and made a dispassionate and disinterested study of conditions there, are convinced that it (the abolition of private ownership) would throw the countryside into confusion and ultimate ruin."

Notice the "disinterestedness"! Just as a professional crook might make a "dispassionate examination of a proposal to increase the number of policemen and be "convinced" that it would be bad for business and an imposition on the ratepayer!

Mr. Smith admits the confusion of ideas, for, after mentioning various schemes which find favour with different sections, "confiscation," "land bonds," "taxation of land values," etc., he writes "we do not see anything to regret in the existence of considerable diversity among members of the Labour Party." He claims, whoever, two fundamental objects:

1. To get a big agricultural population, and
2. To grow as much food in these Islands as possible.

He admits the second quite frankly to be a war measure, and wonders whether Labour should concern itself with such a question, knowing "that preparation for war produces an atmosphere in which fear and greed are easily manipulated to cause an outbreak".

Apart from the fact that war springs from capitalism itself and not from the fear and greed of the workers, which are themselves only the manifestation of the state of anarchy and ignorance in which the system keeps them, has Mr. Smith forgotten the part played by his party in the last war? Mr. Smith may, as an individual, have retained his sanity in 1914, but can he deny that the Labour Party did, cheerfully and whole-heartedly, not only support the war, but condone every act of suppression the Government chose to introduce under the cover of military necessity?

Further, in case you should think that by-gones should be by-gones, and that the Labour Party will act differently in the next war, just consider this from the same article: "and the Labour Party's policy will certainly be to aim at as much progress in the agricultural indus-

try as possible, such progress being socially necessary and desirable as a means of securing the nation against serious difficulty in times of crisis through war or world shortage." Substitute "capitalist" for "nation" and you have the real attitude of the Labour Party.

As for the first point he contends that "a strong, happy population on the countryside is socially necessary, and that no system of national life can continue to exist and develop which is not founded on such a population."

If this means that our present social system cannot work without a healthy and contented population I simply don't believe it. Farmers have never been so prosperous as during and immediately after the war, and he himself admits that this has been accompanied by a further decrease in the number of agricultural workers. He goes on, "we recognise the necessity for a prosperous industry and cannot therefore be opposed to whatever steps will make for prosperity." Our criticism is simply this, that on one hand the prosperity of the nation, which means, of course, the employers, is most decidedly not dependent on the well-being of the workers; and on the other hand that the employers can usually be trusted to look after their own prosperity, and if to do so involves attempts to lower still further the workers' standard of life, the Labour Party has not the power, if it had the will, effectively to resist.

Again, he says he welcomes the increased use of machinery, and the possibilities it offers of an outlet for ambitious workers. He welcomes it because he cannot prevent it; but can it be denied that every mechanical improvement under present conditions only adds to the insecurity of the workers?

Whatever the merits of these two points of policy Mr. Smith does not think they can be achieved under the present system of land ownership. He points out that only 5,000 landowners own 1,000 acres, and between them they possess half England, the whole being in the hands of about 1,000,000 people. To remedy this outrageous state of affairs he would nationalise the land. Not, however, "because it will mean the entire emancipation of the working-class, but because it is necessary in the interest of efficiency." Naturally, no one who knows the Labour Party would accuse it of desiring the emancipation of the workers: they have a better reason than this. "Farmers should be able to expect a fair return, whatever be the nature of their land." I am not misreporting him—he is perfectly frank. "We have already seen how, in other industries it (nationalization) is being advocated by Capitalists and their newspapers . . . clearly showing (if indeed anyone seriously doubted it) that

nationalization can be, and is, advocated as part of a better organisation of Capitalism itself." May I ask why, if Mr. Smith doesn't seriously doubt it, he remains in the party which "stands pledged" to nationalization? "We do not reject it on this account, but we recognise it for what it truly is." Could any opponent of the Labour Party invent anything more damning than this?

"For the immediate future, however, practical politics are more likely to be concerned with questions of nationalization, to which, in the interests of efficiency, we are certainly not opposed." We challenge Mr. Smith to show efficiency is of benefit to the workers. Increased efficiency simply means the more intensive exploitation of the wage earners by the class which lives on their labour.

He mentions the desirability of doing away with the hordes of middlemen who stand between farmers and the consumers of their produce, and confidently looks to nationalization to achieve it. The advantage of this to the farmers is fairly obvious, but again, how can this improve the workers' lot, involving, as it must, the unemployment of the thousands of employees of these middlemen?

Mr. Smith considers a "moderate" Labour Government may follow the present one, and will introduce a Bill for the nationalisation of the land.

"In that case we should be compelled to support such a Bill, always keeping in view its limited value and watching to see that nothing was done towards manufacturing fresh obstacles to real sweeping measures." I do not exactly know who that "we" is intended to represent, but whoever they are it is obvious from their being "obliged" to support the Government, and from the fact that the "real sweeping measures" are admittedly out of the question for the time being, that they are only a minority. That being so they are quite evidently not in a position to prevent the "manufacturing of fresh obstacles." Means have yet to be discovered of holding up the machinery of government merely by "watching and seeing," and a little thought would probably show that the "limited value" of the Bill in question would really be, for the workers, a positive evil. Even such an apparently harmless proposal as the "reform of weights and measures" is open to criticism, as a recent experience showed. A successful agitation by a worker's organisation to get corn sacks reduced in size was followed by a move to employ boys in the place of men!

Mr. Smith cannot see that there is any necessary antagonism between farmers and the labourers they exploit. "Convinced then that any forward policy such as outlined above must

be for the benefit of agriculture as a whole, the Labour Party's policy will be to aim at as much progress in the agricultural industry as possible." He has a grudge against the landlords. "None of us want to give the landlords more, since 'living by owning' is not a profession the Labour Party can recognise."

Why not? As both farmers and landlords live on the surplus value taken from the workers why discriminate between them?

"Undoubtedly under a Labour Government, even if there were no general attempt at Socialisation, our system of taxation would undergo great reforms . . . much to the benefit of the farmers." Does Mr. Smith really think Socialism merely a glorified re-adjustment of the "system of rating and taxation"?

He concludes with a quite unnecessary assurance to "good farmers" that they have nothing to fear from a Labour Government. No, the Labour Party will defend the present order and when, to quote his words, "the proletariat develops sufficient social consciousness to bring about the complete overthrow of capitalism," the Labour Party will be involved in the overthrow.

May I add one word of advice to those, including the I.L.P. and the Communist Party, who will insist on creating an agricultural problem in this country out of the alleged but unexplained difference between the relations of the workers and employers in towns and the labourers and farmers in the country. There simply isn't any difference. All we have here is part of the general task of emancipating the workers from wage slavery. The solution of the Land problem is the recognition that for the workers there isn't any real problem.

P. J. L.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE]

## A QUESTION OF CLASSIFICATION.

### Some Contradiction.

A writer in the "Daily Chronicle" calling himself Collum has an article entitled "Strikes and the Middle Classes," in which he attempts to show that the people he calls the "Middle Classes" are long-suffering and enduring under the tyranny of rulers on the one hand, and extortionate Trade Unionists on the other, but in reality are the most powerful section of the community. "It will be a bad day," he says, "for the working class when its extremist delegates succeed in driving the middle class to reprisals, because in a struggle for survival the middle class is bound to win."

From this extract we see on which side of the hedge his "middle class" takes its stand. Its interests are evidently opposed to the interests of the workers. What the threat of reprisals is worth, we need not trouble to consider; our chief interest is to discover who are the people that make up this class, which is at the same time the most powerful and yet the most down-trodden, and why they permit any other section of society to dominate them. Collum's description of this mythical class is quoted in full:

### Some Mixture.

It is a queer mixture, this heterogeneous mass of citizens calling itself the Middle Class. The younger sons of the old landowning aristocracy slip down into it, and find there before them a solid phalanx of descendants of many generations of younger sons, and of the landed gentry that has long since lost or been taxed off its land, and has been earning its daily bread in one or other of the liberal professions or in business.

Ambitious young men and maidens of the yeoman class who have benefited by technical education, and have "got on in the world," climb up into it, only to discover that the children of countless generations of peasant pioneers have done the same thing before them, and having become managers or even owners of little businesses, or shareholders in

big ones, are now thoroughly identified in their interests with this great central stratum of the population that has come to include all who do not live by sub-letting part of their land to farmers on the one hand, and all who are ineligible for the working men's trade unions on the other.

### Some Failure.

Now this is a genuine attempt to mark off the kind of people who make up the so-called middle class. Most writers are content to use the term loosely, leaving their readers to imagine a section of society that cannot be described as capitalists or as workers, or that partakes equally of the characteristics of both and, therefore, cannot be said to belong to either, but falls into a separate class by itself.

Although a genuine attempt, however, it is a complete failure for two reasons. First because the standard by which we are to judge who belong to this class is absurd, and secondly because, no sound reasons being given for separating those named into a class by themselves, he fails to establish the existence of a third class as a scientific fact. The absurdity of the standard he sets up is at once apparent when we remember that it is possible for a capitalist to possess enormous wealth and yet never to have been a landowner at all. Moreover, many shareholders in commercial concerns own land, and many landowners are also shareholders in industrial concerns.

### Some Sense.

There is no purpose in classes at all unless such classes divide society into upper and lower, rulers and ruled. And there is no purpose in ruling unless it is to obtain, without toil, the largest possible share of the wealth produced by the class that is ruled. The "queer mixture" which Collum calls the middle class, according to him does not rule, because govern-

ments ignore their interests and generally treat them with contempt. He says "Governments in all lands have usually taken its patriotism for granted and unhesitatingly sacrificed its interests when threatened by aristocracies in the past or by privileged corporations of industrial workmen in our day."

#### Some Strength.

So much for their boasted power—a class that can be sacrificed by one class to satisfy the demands of another is obviously of little account in the struggle of classes, and should find its proper place with the class that is ruled. Moreover, if we examine the "queer mixture" sketched out by Collum, we shall find that they really belong to that class.

The "younger sons of the old land-owning aristocracy who have slipped down" are obviously on the same plane as the "ambitious young men and maidens of the yeoman class." Both are faced with the necessity of earning a living. They compete with each other for jobs. This is the common ground on which they meet; but the first named, before they slipped down, were not under this necessity. They lived without being compelled to sell their energy, consequently they have changed their class. This is not the case with the second named. These have merely changed their jobs. They have to work still, but the work is more agreeable and possibly better paid. They have not stepped from one class to another. They have risen to the upper layers of their class, but not out of it. They still must bring to the labour market a form of energy that is saleable.

The name they give to the remuneration they are able to exact does not classify them out of their class. They may draw salaries, fees, or even have dividend-bearing shares allotted to them as part payment—all these are merely the price of their labour-power. Nor does the nature of the work performed remove a man from one class to another. If he works because he must in order to live, he belongs to the working class. Brains and muscles are both necessary to the worker before his labour-power—which is in all cases a combination of these two, can be sold as a commodity on the labour market.

#### Some Matter.

The one thing that matters to every man and woman in capitalist society is whether or not they have to sell their labour-power in order to live. The difference is that between freedom and slavery. To live on rent, interest, or profit without toil, or to sell the only thing they possess—their energy—and work at the bidding of another. A division which means so much to every member of human society must obviously

be the most important to society as a whole. But the fact of such a division does not become general knowledge until many years after its discovery, because the spread of such knowledge conflicts with the interests of the ruling-class, who recognise in the general acceptance of scientific classifications of their system, the first step towards its disintegration.

#### Some Definition.

In the main capitalist society is made up of those who work for wages and those who, sharing in the ownership of the means of life, can live without work on rent, interests, or profits. All the people mentioned by Collum come under one of these two heads. It is the only important division of a general character. The first is the working class and the second the capitalist or master class. Every politician and dabbler in social subjects refers to the one and the other in those terms. Those who work under capitalism—with very few exceptions—are those who are compelled to do so in order to live and, broadly speaking, make up the working class. Those who are not compelled to work for wages, but, by virtue of the fact that they own some portion of the land or other means of wealth production, belong to the capitalist class. This is as much a scientific generalisation as the statement that the organic world is divided into the two great classes, animal and vegetable. In both cases, however, there is an insignificant fringe, or borderland, between the two broad divisions, made up of species in the one case, and individuals in the other, which it is somewhat difficult to classify; but generally speaking, men and women fall into one class or the other when we discover whether their income is derived mainly from exploitation or from the sale of their labour-power in one form or another.

#### Some Competition.

Everybody knows that there are a number of well-paid and at the same time easy jobs scattered about among the great bulk of arduous and ill-paid ones, but they are few compared with the latter, even in the occupations and professions in which they exist. The majority of those engaged in any profession are constantly struggling to maintain themselves and secure recognition. The competition between them continually grows keener in direct proportion as the ordinary conditions of the vast majority become more strenuous and ill paid. The "younger sons of the land-owning aristocracy" and the "ambitious young men and maidens of the yeoman class"—a class which, by the way, disappeared with the feudal system—all meet in this competitive arena, competing for a living by the sale of their energy or ser-

vices. They belong to the class that lives by the sale of its labour-power.

#### Some Conclusion.

It is for those who talk glibly about the middle class to show on what grounds that class can be separated from the two main divisions mentioned above. In capitalist society the broad distinction is between capitalists and workers—between the class that owns the means of wealth-production and lives by exploitation, without labour, and the class that lives on wages, which is the price of labour-power, in one form or another. This latter class is correctly termed the working class, even by capitalists, to distinguish it from the class that does not work—a distinction which is a necessary result of our classification and proves its essential character. It divides human society into workers and drones. It is thus elementary, fundamental, and of the utmost importance, because without work human needs cannot be satisfied and human society cannot exist.

F. F.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

To THE EDITORS.

Plaza de la Derrota 13,  
Bilboa, Spain.  
15th Jan., 1921.

Dear Sirs,—I think there is no doubt that sooner or later the mass of the workers in factories, mines, ships, offices, etc., will be converted to the principles of Socialism, and the victory practically won in the most advanced industrial countries, such as the United States, Great Britain, Germany, etc.

But then the question arises, what about the countries which are predominantly agricultural, such as France, Spain, Russia, Japan, etc.? It is well known that the peasantry everywhere are far more refractory to the Socialist propaganda than are the industrial workers, and in Europe at any rate, these people still form by far the greater part of the population.

In France, Belgium, some parts of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and now in Russia as a result of the revolution, the peasant proprietors with their families form in every case at least half the population and in some cases much more. This class is completely hostile to Socialism and up to the present all attempts to convert them have proved absolutely fruitless.

It may be said that the Marxian doctrine proves that in time the properties owned by this class will become merged in great estates belonging to wealthy capitalists or capitalist companies. All I can say is that hitherto there

is not the slightest sign of any such process, rather the reverse: the number of peasant proprietors tends to increase. Great Britain is, I believe, the only country in which this class has been practically eliminated.

What is the opinion of your party regarding these people? Are they to be considered as capitalists or proletarians, or as combining some of the features of both these classes?

Yours faithfully,

J. Urquhart.

#### THE SIMPLE SOLUTION.

The great factor overlooked by Mr. Urquhart is the development of agricultural machinery and science. While it is quite true that peasant proprietor is hostile to Socialism, as the Bolsheviks have found out in Russia, in countries that are coming more fully into the orbit of capitalism the economic pressure is driving these peasants into new paths. In Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland, and to a growing extent Belgium, the need for machinery, pedigree stock, means of transport, etc., has forced forward the formation of co-operative societies who purchase these things, the members using them in turn. This is one of the stages in the industrialisation of agriculture and necessarily carries in its wake the increase of industrial workers in that sphere. The small farmers and peasant proprietors not only combine to hire and purchase machinery, but also hire wage labourers to run or assist in running this machinery. Those peasants who do not follow this method are driven out of competitive business by their more efficient rivals.

A further factor, often lost sight of, is the operation of the giant capitalist concerns who are taking over huge farms and ranches, particularly in South America, and whose competition with European products, when fully developed, will crush out numbers of those who at present are able to scratch an existence from their little plots.

Mr. Urquhart says "the number of peasant proprietors tends to increase," but gives no evidence to support this statement. To take one country alone—France—the number of peasant proprietors has greatly decreased. While the actual number of peasants is still large—nearly 50 per cent. of the population—the majority of them are not proprietors as their little plots are mortgaged up to the hilt and are really owned by the moneylenders.

Our view is that the peasants are in a transition stage from small ownership to either (a) joint ownership developing into the capitalist position or (b) to the loss of their small property and their becoming wage workers as the result.

Ed. Com.

## WHERE RUSSIA STANDS.

After the Bolsheviks had obtained possession of power their outlook and tactics underwent certain fundamental changes.

Before the upheaval Lenin had set out certain propositions, absolutely essential, in his opinion, as a programme for the Russian Communist Party. These propositions are contained in a pamphlet entitled: "Towards Soviets. Thesis and a letter on Tactics." ("International Library" 14, published by the late British Socialist Party.) In order to illustrate some of the changes in views and methods practice forced upon the Bolsheviks, we will deal with some of the propositions mentioned.

On page 6 appears the following:

While we are in the minority, we carry on the work of criticism and explanation of mistakes, urging at the same time the necessity of the transfer of all power to the Councils of Workers' Deputies, in order that the masses may free themselves from mistakes by actual experience.

This reads very nicely—"All power to the Councils of Workers' Deputies"—the inference being that by this means all power would pass into the hands of the Russian workers, soldiers, and peasants. All through the insurrection the slogan "All power to the Workers" was used by the Bolsheviks as a rallying cry, to their considerable advantage, to say nothing of the furor it created among their windy would-be imitators in this country.

Right from the commencement the Bolsheviks, in practice, acted contrary to this principle. "All power to the Workers" remained, from the very beginning, nothing more than a phrase. All power signifies either what it is or—wind. In actual fact, like the so-called "Rights of Man" in the American and French Revolutions, the working out of the idea has been entirely different from its inference. In Russia "All Power to the Workers" signifies all power to a fraction of the Bolshevik Party.

When the insurrection had been carried to a certain point successfully and the time arrived for "all power" to pass over to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, the wire-pulling commenced. The Bolsheviks claimed to be the ruling party in Russia (although only a tiny fraction of the population), and would only agree to hand over power (which they, as leaders of the insurrectionary movement, already held) on certain very important conditions, relating to the constitution of the People's Commissaries (the new form of government), which left all power where it already was—in the hands of the Bolshevik leaders. It is true other parties at the Congress were offered a place in the Government, but only in a minority

to the Bolsheviks, and on condition that all the important departments were filled by the latter. After tumultuous sessions the Bolsheviks eventually gained their end. (John Reed. "Ten Days that Shook the World.")

An ominous forecast of the future had been given by Trotzky when speaking on the 7th November 1917, during a night session of the Petrograd Soviet. He said that telegrams had been sent to the front announcing the victorious insurrection; also that troops were said to be marching against Petrograd to whom a delegation must be sent to tell them the truth. At this there were cries of "You are anticipating the will of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets." To which Trotzky replied "The will of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets has been anticipated by the rising of the Petrograd workers and soldiers." (See John Reed p. 86.)

The final emptiness of the "All Power" slogan, however, was demonstrated by Zinovief in his report to the First Congress of the 3rd International in March 1919, where he stated:

Our Central Committee has decided to deprive certain categories of party members of the right to vote at the Congress of the Party. Certainly it is unheard of to limit the right of voting within the party, but the entire party has approved this measure, which is to ensure the homogeneous unity of the Communists.

So that, in fact, we have 500,000 members who manage the entire state from top to bottom.

—"Socialist," 29.4.1920.

This shows how much of the "All Power" the Russian workers, soldiers, and peasants possess. 500,000 out of about 180 millions possess all power in Russia! And this eighteen months after the successful insurrection led by the group who made the world ring with the rallying cry that was to be the corner stone of the edifice they would build. It will therefore be wise to remember that the organisation of Councils of Workers by no means guarantees the passing of power into the hands of the mass of the workers.

The paragraphs quoted above demonstrate that the power of the Russian people to-day "is vested in its Government"—the Government composed of the ruling faction of the Russian Communist Party. Lenin himself supplies us with a damning indictment of such a state of affairs, as witness the following:

Inasmuch as all the power of a people is vested in its government the people is divested of all power.

So that, with the able assistance of Zinovief and Lenin, we are now possessed of the information that the net result of the "All Power to the People" movement is that "the people is divested of all power!"

We will now take another proposition from

the same paragraph in "Towards Soviets." This proposition runs as follows:

"The abolition of the police, the army, the bureaucracy."

There is a footnote to this particular item which states that the standing army would be replaced by the universal arming of the people.

In the first place was the standing army abolished on the accession to power of the Bolsheviks? Of course not. On the contrary it was enlarged as a standing army by the addition of fresh units of armed workmen. Any one who had suggested, at the time, the abolition of the standing army would have been regarded as a lunatic. The Army Council system was continued for a while, but it was found to be unworkable and was eventually abandoned. On this question Trotzky made the following statements in an address at the City Conference of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow, 28th March, 1918:

How do violence, carelessness, and even unscrupulousness develop? They come exclusively from the fact that persons are holding positions they cannot master. Examine at close range what is happening in the Ukraine. Those who fought splendidly and heroically against the Kaledins, Dutoffs, and Korniloffs, who conquered these enemies who stood on the same technical level with them, failed us when they were confronted with the German military machine and felt the sense of their utter helplessness. Hence their dissatisfaction with themselves. They, these commanders of guerilla bands, fight against one another, accuse one another, not infrequently fight less against the Germans than against the native population. The example of what is happening in the Ukraineshows us that if we are to speak seriously about the defense of the Soviet Revolution by force of arms, by means of war, we must reject all the empty talk of the Left Social Revolutionaries about partisan or guerilla warfare, and all measures that make use of small bands, and proceed to the task of creating a regular army. Only if this regular army exists can these partisan bands play a positive part on its flanks. But in order to create such an army we need trained specialists, including the former generals.—("Class Struggle," Vol. III, No. 4. Article "Work, Discipline and Order.")

The above suggests anything but the abolition of the army. Nor is it even the universal arming of the people, as a further quotation from the same address will show more clearly still:

The duty of the Party organisations, the Party cells, will consist in making sure that the elements entering the army are in a political and moral sense of good standing.

The only inference to be drawn from this is that proved Bolshevik supporters were armed, but neutrals or doubtfuls did not become a part of the "armed people." Here is again an illustration of how practice converted a "revolutionary slogan" into mere wind. Bolshevik Russia cannot get on without a standing army, and, as

in ordinary capitalist countries, the material composing this army is carefully selected and trained.

The next proposition in the paragraph in "Towards Soviets" lays down—

The payment of all officials—elective and revokable at any time, at a rate not exceeding the average wage of a good workman.

Was this policy adhered to? By no means. Backward Russia was not ready for this any more than for the others.

We may here point out that the fundamental principles we are now examining are just the ones upon which Lenin grounds his claim that Bolshevik principles and policy are the working out of the principles laid down and acted upon by the Paris Commune. By showing that the Bolsheviks did not act in accordance with these principles we are, at the same time, illustrating where their policy differed from that of the Communards. We hope to go further into this particular question, but for the moment would urge that these points be borne in mind.

To proceed, let us take, first of all, the question of the payment of officials at the average rate of a good workman.

As soon as the Bolsheviks commenced the work of reconstruction they found themselves faced with a shortage of technical experts. In every direction ruin threatened unless they could enlist the assistance of those trained in the higher branches of science and organisation. In order to obtain this assistance they had to hold out a bait. Apparently force could not be applied. They were unable to say to this skilled section "Work or starve!" Why? Because the workers and peasants of Russia were too intellectually backward to understand the meaning of the common ownership of wealth and its implication—the equal sharing of the burden of producing. Consequently it was possible for a portion of the population to obtain the necessities of life without taking any part in production.

All through the writings of Lenin, Trotzky, and others runs the complaint of profiteering and selfishness among the peasants and other workers. If the land in Russia were owned and worked by the poor peasants, and its produce only supplied to the workers and those physically incapable of work, there would be no pickings for profiteers or food for parasites. The only conclusion we can come to is that the peasant sells to those from whom he can get the best price—in other words he acts in accordance with the ordinary capitalist commercial code—and the back door is open to the speculator.

What was the bait held out to the technical experts, who could obtain the means of subsis-

tence without working? The bait was high wages—far higher wages than “the average of a good workman.”

The following quotations are interesting in this connection. They are taken from “Resolutions and Regulations of the IX Congress of the Russian Communist Party” (29th March–4th April, 1920) published by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, Moscow.

Rivalry between factories, regions, guilds, workshops and individual workers should become the subject of careful organisation and of close study on the side of the trade unions and the economic organs.

The system of premiums which is to be introduced should become one of the most powerful means of exciting rivalry. The system of rationing food supply is to get into touch with it: so long as Soviet Russia suffers from an insufficiency of provisions it is only just that the industrious and conscientious workers receive more than the indigent worker—(p. 8).

Registration of individual output or productivity of labour and the granting of corresponding individual premiums must also be carried out in a way suitable to administrative technical staff. Better conditions must be secured for our best administrators and engineers to enable them to make full use of their capacities in the interests of socialist economy.

A special system of premiums is to be established for those specialists under whose guidance the workers can attain the necessary qualifications to make them capable to accept further independent independent posts.

In the above paragraphs we see put forward the capitalist ethic of private gain as a motive force instead of the Socialist ethic—Social approbation, or the general good.

In connection with the above quotations and as an illustration of the lack of Socialist knowledge on the part of “a considerable part of the workers” the following will be interesting:

Owing to the fact that a considerable part of the workers either in search of better food conditions or often for purposes of speculation voluntarily leave their places of employment . . . the Congress considers one of the most important problems of the Soviet Government and of the trade union organisations to be the establishment of a firm, systematic, and insistent struggle against labour desertion. The way to fight this is to publish a column of desertion fines, the formation of labour detachments of deserters under fine and finally, internment in concentration camps.—(Same source, p. 19. See also pp. 23 and 25.)

The last few lines, in view of those to whom the penalties apply, suggest, not the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat,” but the iron rule of the Bolshevik leaders.

Now let us take the next of Lenin's points, that of the elective principle relating to officials. The application of this principle was short-lived and it was finally abolished at the IX Congress of the Communist Party.

(4) The Trade Unions participate in the formation of the administration of factories or works. This is effected with the consent and agreement of the corresponding organs of the Supreme Council of Public Economy; the principle of election must now give place to that of selection, which is to be based on practical experience and qualifications, on technical competency, firmness, organising capacity and business efficiency of the candidates.

—Rules and Regulations, p. 27.)

To really grasp the significance of this throwing overboard of the election principle it must be borne in mind that the appointment of such officials is not under the control of the trade unions, or similar bodies, but is under the direct control of the ruling group in the Bolshevik party, and further that the officials are revocable by this group only and not by any other organisation. A further quotation will illumine this point.

It is therefore necessary that every trade union possess a strictly disciplined, organised fraction of the Communist Party. Every fraction of the Party represents a section of the local organisation which is under the control of the party committee, whilst fractions of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions are under the control of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. All the regulations concerning conditions and organisation of labour are binding upon all trade union organisations as well as upon members of the party working therein and can be repealed by no other party organs except the Central Committee of the Party—(p. 25).

As yet a further illustration of the iron nature and wire-pulling methods the Russian mass ignorance has forced upon the Bolsheviks, and also as an illustration of the way in which the latter keep their hold upon power, we give the following quotations from an article by Lenin entitled “Should the Communists Participate in Reactionary Trade Unions?” printed in the “Workers' Dreadnought” Jan. 22, 1921. Here is Lenin's statement as to the position and activities of the Communist Party and its relation to the Russian masses:

The Communist Party meets annually in convention and is represented by one delegate for each 1,000 members. It is headed by a Central Committee elected at the Convention and consisting of 19 members, while the current work is conducted by a still smaller group at Moscow—the Collegium—called the Organisation and Political Bureaux, consisting of five members each, who are in turn elected by the plenary session of the C.E.C. No important political or organisation question is decided by any State institution without the sanction of the E.C. of the Communist Party.

As a matter of fact all the executive bodies of the vast majority of the Trade Unions, and of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, are composed of Communist Party members who carry out all the instructions of the Party.

By this means . . . is developed a broad and mighty proletarian apparatus through which, under

the leadership and direction of the Communist Party, is realised the Dictatorship of the working class.

The above bears a suspicious resemblance to the wire-pulling, bribing methods applied to labour leaders by “the best bourgeois parliamentary democracies”! Was there ever a more iron dictatorship of the few? Was there ever a more “paternal” government? Surely the Dictatorship of the Working Class should at least signify that workers will dictate the means and methods to be pursued in organisation and so forth. Yet here we see that not the working class, but the leaders of the Communist Party do the dictating. So the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat” is only another myth or “revolutionary” slogan.

A careful perusal of the quotations contained in this article will elicit the fact that another of Lenin's fundamental propositions—the abolition of the Bureaucracy—was also consigned to oblivion. What is Bureaucracy? According to Annandale's Dictionary it is the system of centralising the administration of a country, through regularly graded series of government officials. And what else is the administration of Russian affairs to-day in actual fact? “Better conditions must be secured for our best administrators.” “A special system of premiums . . . for those specialists, etc.” “Assigning class conscious workers to all village posts, etc.” and so forth.

And this, we are told, represents the transition stage from Capitalism to Socialism! To us it reads like the efforts of a “vigorous” few to retain power after having gained it upon a wave of popular emotion without having the backing of knowledge on the part of the majority of the population.

These facts should drive home more powerfully than ever the hopelessness of attempting to bring about a change in the social basis before the majority of those composing the class concerned understand the meaning of such a change and give the movement class-conscious support.

GILMAC.

To be Continued.

### “KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.”

Economic Class at Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. (off Farringdon Road) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Try to attend.

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## A DAVID COMES TO JUDGMENT.

Once again a frank admission of the correctness of the policy pursued by the Socialist Party of Great Britain since its inception; that is to educate and organise the majority of the working class into a class-conscious political party for the purpose of wresting political power from the ruling class as the first essential step toward their emancipation.

Speaking as the guest at the luncheon of the New Members Coalition Group, Mr. Lloyd George told them that the need for the Coalition was as great as ever because of the rise of a new party which he declared was not Labour but Socialist. He quoted figures to show how the Labour Party's vote has gone up by leaps and bounds in the course of a few years. He told them that a change of four per cent. in the voting would put the Socialists in a majority. Now the point that should be keenly observed is that if the Labour Party, who are not the friends of the working class, but their enemies, can capture political power through the means of the ballot box, for the furtherance of exploitation and robbery of the working class in the capitalist State, surely it demonstrates to any sane, thinking man or woman that when they deem it necessary to use their vote in their own interest instead of in the interest of a class that keeps them in poverty, misery, and degradation they can do so.

One amusing point of the Premier's speech is where he states that the new party want to uproot, tear up, and plant the wild and poisonous berries of Karl Marxism. Now this assertion shows clearly and concisely his short-lived memory; for did he not tell us some time ago through the Capitalist Press that these Labour men made decent carpenters in the Liberal workshop—in other words that they were capable of doing the dirty work of the capitalist class.

Now after these poisonous berries have been strewn across the path of the working class by the anti-Marxian party, he is not afraid of the people of this country being won over to the subversive doctrines of Karl Marx. “They don't suit the British mind,” he tells us. They are more German in their characteristics and the British psychology will never take them. One thing stands out fairly clear, and that is that the little Welsh wizard and the class whom he serves have more to fear from the working class getting a knowledge of the principles of Socialism laid down by Marx and Engels than they have from this so-called formidable party.

[H. ARTHURTON.]

**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

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**The Socialist Standard,**

WEDNESDAY,



JUNE 1, 1921.

**THE SPECTRE.**

"Nearly 4,000,000 Workers Idle." Such is the significant headline published in that sober capitalist organ, the "Daily Chronicle." Is there any need to urge our readers to think what it means? Surely not! Many of you, doubtless, have the first-hand knowledge of direct victims of the wave of starvation which is sweeping over the country, and for that matter over the world. And yet—!

"Nearly 4,000,000 Workers Idle." That would be somewhere about a third of the total number of workers of the country. It means, in all probability, that the livelihood of some 15,000,000 of the working class of the country is cut off, and they are forced to exist or die upon the unemployment dole!

So that spectre of Central Europe, which we were made to feel the presence of so painfully by humbugging charity-mongers and the hypocritical Rich, intent upon showing how much worse off the war had left the "enemy" than you, is truly with us now. Those ghastly pictures of starving women and dead children, so judiciously tucked away now that Charity has such ample opportunity at home, might be brought out to do another turn—to illustrate another episode in capitalist history, if not to advertise another "Save the Children" fraud. And over them might be printed: "The Land fit for Heroes to Live in," and under: "Is not this Worth Fighting For?"

It is sought, of course, to put the blame on the miners, as it always, on policy, is sought by the capitalist thieves to cover their crimes by blaming the victims of them; but the truth is

not very difficult to discover. The system of producing wealth in vogue to-day does not concern itself with the satisfaction of human needs but only with the production of profits. It is not the business of the system how much wealth it places at the disposal of the producers, but only how much it secures for the non-producers.

That is the whole secret. It is in order that you may produce profit for the master class that you live; and when your existence no longer contributes to that end you can die.

There is but one remedy, and that lies in the establishment of the Socialist system, founded upon the common ownership of the means of living. Study for it! Organise for it! Work for it!

**SEVENTEEN YEARS.**

Under the heading "Two Years," Mr. N. W. Ewer in the "Daily Herald's" May Day Annual claims recognition for the correctness of views held in the Spring of 1919 by some few nameless Socialists whom the world then regarded as cynics and scoffers. Then "amiable and credulous folk were still looking hopefully to President Wilson and the Paris Conference to secure a lasting peace for the world."

"To-day Kaiser-hanging is a joke. So is the League. . . . Mr. Wilson's principles are as dead as Mr. Wilson's power."

Unfortunately the "amiable and credulous folk" who invariably mislead the workers are by no means dead. The Macdonalds and Lansburys who recruited for King Capital in 1914 and supported Lansdown or Wilson or any other politician who temporarily differed or pretended to differ from his colleagues on the desirability of continuing the war, are still carrying on. It is so easy for the workers to forget. In April 1921 some twenty or more prominent members of the Labour Party are to be found supporting an appeal to the Allies to revise the Peace settlement on the basis of the 14 Points. Having urged the workers to take part in the war and having seen the result of it, the Labour Party "believes in reparations," but finding the division of the loot among the victors unsatisfactory, it considers a redistribution to be necessary and will no doubt want the same workers to be prepared fight again for this.

Mr. Ewer condemns the Liberals in no measured terms, but is there one word of that condemnation which could not as aptly be applied to the Labour Party?

"The world it is clear is not going to be saved from war by self-determination or by open diplomacy any more than by Kaiser-hanging.

(Continued on p. 156.)

EXTRACT FROM  
**'THE COMPLEAT  
SOCIALIST.'**

Being a Discourse not Unworthy of the  
Perusal of Most Reformers.

Reformer. No Party. Socialist.

REF.—A good morning, gentlemen, to you both! Your countenances, methinks, promise cheerful discourse, and I hope your business may occasion you to Carlisle, whither I am bound in the excellent train. We are all so happy as to have a smoking compartment, and I hope we shall each be the happier for the others' company. It may well be so, with the help of good discourse, as an invitation to the which I propose diligently to endeavour to entertain you, my subject being my humble labours for the commonweal. Now to begin, I profess myself a Reformer, e'en one that has for a goodly number of years directed all his zeal to the task of the betterment of mankind. And you are first to hear how wretched a spectacle confronted me when in early manhood I regarded the lives of my fellow workers. How had a man to toil so long in the day that body and mind grew bent to his task! How did the youth his son waste his days amid smoke and clamour, so that when he had climbed but to twenty years he was no longer young! And consider his daughter, that should have been comely and dainty as a phrase of sweet music; went she not wearily, in unpleasant raiment, to the like drudgery? And I may put you in mind what was their requital. They had perforce to restore themselves with victuals of the meanest, notwithstanding that the thrifty wife had cudgelled her brains and tired her limbs perfectly to obtain the utmost her slender purse would buy. And for his house, which some did use to call his kingdom—what was it but an incommensurable shelter, so put together and of such materials, as to increase the labour of the housewife by tenfold? And for his infants, to the which the meadow and the seashore should be a playground, and to whose delight trees and brooks should minister, they ran their races in squalid streets, and hushed their dolls on doorsteps.

I say, all this, and much more which I could feelingly relate, was the pitiable lot of the working people, from which they seemed nowise able to escape, were they never so diligent and careful. And the contemplation of their material hardships was like to possess my whole thoughts; but I grew to perceive that divers hatreds mingled with their sorrows, and made their bread yet more bitter and their hovels intolerable. The men did revile their fellow men, and even more heartily their fellow women,

for that all wished to serve a master for hire, and the masters required but part of them. And old workers held young workers to be their enemies, because masters would more willingly hire them; but when wars broke upon the earth—for what causes they knew not, nor do I rightly know—all these, men and women, old and young together, hated perfectly their brothers in other lands, and suffered exquisitely in inflicting the like pains on them.

And you are to note, gentlemen, of what character were their recreations! For books and plays, those which they did chiefly use to enjoy had indeed sensation and bilious sentimentality, but little of power or beauty; the commonplace waltz and the maudlin song entertained them for music, and of pictures they loved only the superficially pretty. And now what say you, my masters? Spoke I not truth when I said their lives were wretched?

No P.—Trust me, sir, you did, whereto my own experience serves for more testimony; and now, sir, fulfil your promise by relating wherein you have endeavoured to mend a condition so villainous.

REF.—Well, sirs, I shall divide the improvements in the cause of which I have laboured into four kinds—to wit, Economic, Political, Educational, and Moral. Of the Economic there be—

Workman's Compensation Act,  
Health Insurance,  
Unemployment Insurance,  
Limiting Hours of Labour,  
Establishment of Minimum Wages,  
Rent Restriction Act,

and many more of hardly less note. You are to bear in mind also that with no little difficulty we have secured that divers acts should be amended, which else had worsened the portion of the workers past the bearing. And in the future we do purpose to effect the following:

Nationalisation of land, mines, and railways,  
State Houses,  
State Hospitals,

and not a few others which I doubt not you would confess heartily desirable, but which I will pass by and proceed to the Political, of which I entreat you to remember

Limitation of Power of the House of Lords (and we hope in future time to abolish it),

Extension of the Franchise of Women (and we intend to labour for its further enlargement to include all men and women of discreet years),

Admission of Women to Parliament,  
Payment of M.P.'s.

And of the Educational there are—  
Popular lectures and concerts,  
Mutual improvement societies,

Education Associations  
and all institutions which instruct the unhappy  
ignorant workers how to know what is truly  
excellent in the work of great men. And of  
the Moral have we not supported

Peace Societies,  
Brotherhood Movements,  
Co operative Movements, and  
Universal Languages,

and caused to be printed writings preaching  
the reconciliation of men with women, nation  
with nation, rich with poor. Gentlemen, if I  
should enlarge my discourse, as the extent of my  
subject tempts me to do, I should prove tedious;  
which I am resolved I will not, but will conclude  
with the modest hope that what you have heard  
concerning our labours may urge you to do  
likewise.

No P.—I promise you, sir, your choice expo-  
sition hath pleased me marvellous well; and  
recalling the words of the noble Agrippa I  
would say, "Almost thou persuaded me to be a  
Reformer." But a doubt there is which exer-  
cises me. Look out, I pray you, on the town  
which we are passing e'en now. Methinks I see  
houses ugly and crowded, and these in the  
greatest number. Now sounds the whistle of  
the factory before us: I pray you take note of  
the workers as they are released for their mid-  
day meal. See you those men, have they any  
pleasure in their work? Yonder is a band of  
swains: could they challenge the Olympians?  
And for those maidens hurrying along, are they  
gayer or better apparelled than those of twenty  
years ago? Here stands a theatre, of the which  
the bills invite to "Mr. Mustafa Lotofem"; the  
barrel organ outside (infallible register of po-  
pular taste in music) dispenseth "I'm a Naughty  
Girl"—is the sum of your aesthetic advance  
but this? And we have passed a number of  
such towns, e'en while you so sweetly dis-  
coursed; I know, moreover, because I travel  
much, and because I read the papers, that in all  
parts of this country and indeed in many others  
(those which are accounted the most rich and  
splendid) the lot of those who work is little  
improved. So far as concerneth your distress-  
ful antagonisms between sexes and classes and  
nations, I find them still most feelingly ex-  
pressed; and I would remind you indeed of the  
war which is not yet at an end—how ineffectual  
have been your pleas for Peace and Brother-  
hood!

Where then are the fruits of all your reforms;  
and if I become one of your company, of what  
avail will my endeavour be?

REF.—Well, sir, and upon my word you have  
spoke the very riddle which hath oft tormented  
me of late! All so soon as matters have been in  
one direction bettered, do they in another begin

to worsen. And it gives us Reformers great  
distress to discover that those very measures  
which most appear as being beneficent and full  
of commendation, do oftentimes prove a curse and  
a chain to them whom we did desire to benefit.  
Yet of such is our zeal for the advancement of  
the miserable, that these misfortunes but spur  
us to introduce new reforms.

No P.—Which are like to prove as mischie-  
vous, or at the best worthless, I fear me. In  
sooth, sir, methinks your intentions do you  
credit, but for your achievements, they limp far  
behind.

REF.—You speak roundly, sir, and I am con-  
strained to confess that you have much right on  
your part. But I charge you, show me an alter-  
native or I swear I will be a Reformer for ever;  
for I cannot watch wretchedness inactively.  
Move I must, and all men who feel the pain of  
others, be the achievement never so small.

Soc.—Marry, sir, that alternative will I show  
you, who at first kept silence because I had a  
mind to hear of which kind of Reformers you  
were. For some there be, I pray you let me  
speak it without offence, who profess themselves  
such with the object of mounting to positions of  
some profit. And others there be which love  
publicity, and delight to lead a crowd. Such  
men know well the answer to your riddle, but  
for their own advantage give out false solutions.  
But there is yet another sort of man, who is of  
their fraternity only because he is ignorant of  
that which alone can end the ills which he de-  
plored—and such do I perceive you to be.

REF.—Trust me, sir, I am for you heartily if  
you can show me such a physic, but I fear you  
you are not able, nor any man.

No P.—I fear it too, but let us hear.

A.

(To be Continued.)

NOW ON SALE.

## MANIFESTO

OF THE

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OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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## JOTTINGS.

The Thames Police Court magistrate believes  
that the unemployment dole is destroying the  
morals of the working section of the commu-  
nity. In charging a man for being drunk on  
the dole, he described it as a scandal and an  
outrage, and was astonished that decent indus-  
trial people (there are such, then!) should per-  
mit it to go on. "Really, I wonder that anyone  
works at all." Apart from the silliness of the  
remark (since someone must work before doles  
can be paid) he apparently conveniently forgets  
that there is, at any rate, one section which  
does not believe in working—never did and  
never will—the members of which are main-  
tained on the doles (large ones, too!) they  
succeed in squeezing out of those who do work,  
and whose right to appropriate and misuse is  
not questioned outside the Socialist movement.  
That same class employs magistrates and others  
to interpret so-called justice in their own inter-  
ests. They are the real unemployed.

Mr. Havelock Wilson told a meeting of sea-  
men at Hull the other day that nationalisation  
was the surest way to slavery. The surest way  
is to accept without complaint the conditions  
imposed upon us by another class holding the  
reins of power and at the same time support  
the existence of such conditions by voting this  
class into power, generally with the approval  
and assistance of "leaders" such as Havelock  
Wilson.

That condition has long since been reached.  
We are in the throes of slavery now, not on the  
way to it, as Mr. Wilson suggests.

"In all big questions it was the duty of the  
leaders of trade unions to consult the members  
before taking action. If they did not do so and  
the workmen submitted to degrading and abo-  
minal dictation they deserved to be slaves."

This sounds brave, but coming from Wilson  
we can estimate its value at once, and that is—  
nothing. Has not he himself posed as a leader  
ready to lead the workers anywhere but on the  
right track? And where is there a greater  
would-be dictator if anybody took any notice of  
him? He did not hesitate to support that  
nationalised institution known as the British  
Army when it suited his purposes to do so, in  
spite of the "degrading and abominable dicta-  
tion" attached to it. All along he has defi-  
nitely supported the master class, therefore the  
workers can have no use for him. They can  
emancipate themselves without the assistance  
of leaders, and when they have reached a period  
of full enlightenment due to the spreading of a  
knowledge of what Socialism is, they will act

upon that knowledge and leave the would-be  
leaders where they belong—in the discard.

If what Judge Rutherford of New York says  
comes true, there will apparently soon be no  
need for Socialism. According to the learned  
gentleman it seems that in 1925 the world will  
undergo a complete transformation. No one  
need die unless he chooses; there will be no  
necessity to work, no hunger, no poverty, no  
unhappiness. Bald men will grow new hair;  
toothless gums will be filled with new teeth,  
and men and women will renew their youth and  
for ever become beautiful. And all because of  
a perfect food which will be discovered, and  
which will nourish and sustain everybody for  
ever. Altogether it will be a glorious condition  
of existence due to a process which will be  
revealed in due course by the Lord—if he does  
not forget.

After reading the above it occurred to me that  
an item like this ought to command the atten-  
tion of those members of the House of Commons  
such as J. H. Thomas, John Hodge, Henderson  
and Roberts, who have just attached their  
names to a memorial, along with about a hun-  
dred other anti-Socialists, urging the Minister  
of Health to publish and distribute leaflets  
"which would spread information about healthy,  
nutritious and economical foods" for the work-  
ing class. No doubt Judge Rutherford, who  
appears to be in touch with the old gentleman  
who usually gets the blame for creating this  
ball of misery and madness, would gladly sup-  
ply them with details in advance which would  
help to solve their difficulties.

Overheard in the workmen's tram the other  
morning:

Is this a free country?—Undoubtedly.—Who  
says so?—Those who own it.—Who is it free  
to?—Those who own it.—How about the  
workers?—Being slaves, they only count as  
such.—Have they no rights?—None whatever.  
—Not even the right to work?—Not even that.  
—How came one class to have all the rights?—  
The workers made them a present of them and  
re-affirm it at every General Election.—Then  
they are in chains!—Absolutely.—Well, then,  
haven't I the right to get up and say so?—You  
have not.—Not even to speak the truth?—Not  
even to speak the truth. A man got fined the  
other day for getting up in Hyde Park and  
speaking what he declared was the truth.—  
Then what can be done—Nothing but keep

(Continued on p. 157.)

## SEVENTEEN YEARS—Continued.

These copy book maxims are pretty; but they will not work. They are like all the rest of the liberalism that there is in Liberalism. War, we told the people, is the inevitable result of the economic organisation of the world. If you want to abolish war you have got to alter that organisation."

"Nonsense!" said the Liberals, who didn't wars and also didn't want a social revolution. "Nonsense! you are impossibilists." Now we have had two years' experience. But even now these Liberals will not see. They are convinced . . . that the failure to secure a bourgeois peace is the result of the wickedness or weakness of individuals. . . . And those very people who to-day are deploring Mr. Wilson's failure are repeating his crime. They are still trying to persuade the people that salvation from war can be secured by leagues and arbitrations, and the result of the benevolent illusions of Liberalism."

"They no longer believe that the last war ended war. But they are getting ready to condone the next one as really the last. And they are also busy with proposals that we should all agree to fight it in a more gentlemanly way than before." (In this latter connection it is amusing to note the Labour Party's request to the Government that they should make it possible for the sons of the mere workers easily to reach officer rank in "our army.") "Whether it be America or Japan or France: with whomsoever it may be, and over whatever pretended issue, this is as certain as the sunrise; that the next war will come, and then the next, and then again the next. Unless? Until and unless the system that breeds wars as dirt breeds vermin is swept away. No Fourteen Points, no open diplomacies, no armament limitation or arbitration tribunals or league conventions, or Wilsons or Leagues of Nations can stop it. Liberalism and its bogus internationalism are bankrupt. It is war . . . or revolution."

Thank you, Mr. Ewer. One has only to substitute Sabour for Liberalism in the above to get our point of view. That word "Impossibilist" has a familiar ring. For seventeen years we have preached this and we too have been called the impossibilists by the practical men, and we too have found we were justified by the events, but "even now they will not see." E. H.

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COMMUNIST  
CONSISTENCY.

"The Communist," April 30th, 1921:

(Page 2.) " . . . let us also emphasise the fact that those who come into the real working-class International must come prepared to concentrate on industrial organisation and the freeing of the workers, leaving political and social questions to fall into their proper place for attention after the Revolution."

(Page 3.) "The Communist Party . . . will conduct an unflinching campaign against the power of capitalism; and relentlessly strive by industrial organisation, agitation, and revolutionary political and parliamentary action to urge the working class on towards revolution."

Same paper, same date:

Report of Chairman's address to Manchester Conference.

" . . . the chairman stated the attitude of the Party to be in opposition to all other Labour organisations."

This is the same Communist Party which applied for and was refused permission to affiliate to the National Labour Party. It still allows its branches to affiliate locally, has members on Borough Councils who were elected as Labour men and are still members of local Labour parties and has taken joint electoral action with these bodies.

This "party of the workers" proposes to teach "the smallholders and farmers . . . that the Revolution comes as their friend and to relieve them of the unendurable burden of landlordism." It considers that "the mischievous land nationalisation policy of the (agricultural) unions must be fought and overcome in favour of a policy of socialisation without compensation" (Agrarian Question, p. 7.) It also supports the nationalisation of the mines. ("Communist," 2nd April, 1921.)

THE "MARXIST" COMMUNIST PARTY  
ON WAGES.

"The Workers' Dreadnought," 19th March:

"A Marxian American gives his viewpoint."

"If too great a proportion of the workers are employed, the effect is to temporarily bring about a crisis of unemployment. Wages continue to rise in every industry until they actually catch up with or pass the increases in the cost of living. . . . As soon as the increasing wages seriously reduce or threaten to destroy his (the

employer's) profits he closes down his plant."

"The Communist," 19th February:

"For generations the trade unions have been attempting to improve the status of their members by increased money wages. This has proved futile. Every nominal increase conceded to-day is filched back to-morrow by an ever greater advance in the cost of living."

Asked if this meant the Communist Party accepted the view that "employers can at will raise the price of their goods to the buyer," Mr. Francis Meynell, Editor of the "Communist," replied (28th February):

"Because we say that every nominal increase conceded to-day is filched back to-morrow by an even greater advance in the cost of living we do not mean, as we do not say, that this must be so. If the selfishness of the Capitalist class could be destroyed, or that class destroyed itself, probably an easier task, one could happen without the other."

So now we know all about it.

The capitalist, being selfish, can put up his prices whenever and to whatever extent he chooses, so presumably he doesn't mind giving increased wages. He also resists increases until he can no longer do so and then closes down. Also in the Communist Millennium, supposing the capitalists have been rendered unselfish, we shall be able to get higher wages without higher prices, but should they be obdurate they will be destroyed and replaced, I suppose, by unselfish Communists.

The real gem of the reply is the concluding paragraph, which refers the enquirer to "Wage-Labour and Capital" and "Value, Price, and Profit" for further information!

When this interesting correspondence was followed up Mr. Meynell wrote this (March 16th):

"I was foolish enough to think that your first letter was a genuine enquiry out of a desire for information. As it was no more than a trap for my time and temper, I refuse to put either of them any more at your disposal." If Mr. Meynell ever does change his mind and decide to answer will he please tell me too if bad tempers, like "selfishness," will debar entrance to the promised land? E. H.

## JOTTINGS—Continued.

pegging away at them with Socialist knowledge. It is the only instrument that will knock off the chains and shift the rights from one side to the other.

TOM SALA.

## TO ALL EXPLOITED.

[We have received from an Austrian Comrade the following Call to the Workers of Austria issued by the Austrian Communist Party. It will be observed that it is in marked contrast to the utterances of British Communists. —Eds. "S.S.")

On the 24th April you will choose your representatives for the Provisional Parliament. The Conservatives and the Nationalists are appealing for your votes—parties which, under the cloak of Christianity and Nationalism, are working or the moneybags of the industrial magnates, the landlords, and the big estate proprietors.

You, the exploited, are the overwhelming majority. And yet the exploiters have the power and dominate you! Wherein lies their power?

It is rooted in their ownership of the greater part of the land, of the forests, the mines, the factories, the railroads—in one word, in their ownership of the means of life.

It is maintained through their control of and command over the armed forces, the police, the gendarmes, the Courts, and the whole coercive machinery, with which they keep you down.

It is rooted in their ability—thanks to their command over Church and School, Press and Platform—to stupify you.

It is rooted, finally, in your allowing yourselves to be befogged and mocked by their sham democracy.

They have given you the right to vote, but the right to the sources of wealth, the right to the mines, to the factories, to the great estates, to the forests, they keep for themselves.

Yours the voting power; theirs the wealth, the profits: such is their democracy—a democracy of exploiters!

Never will the exploiters willingly renounce their mines, their factories, their large estates, and their forests!

Never will they voluntarily decide on such a renunciation?

Never will they peaceably acquiesce in such a measure and reform!

Every law made in that Parliament is destined to serve the interests of the exploiters only! To you they throw a few bones, some crumbs, in order to hide their policy of roguery.

And the Social Democrats? They form the bulwark of the exploiters. They demand from them somewhat bigger—crumbs; they praise Socialism to you in fine phrase, but the mines, the factories, the large estates—they leave to the bloodsuckers! Take an example:

Your sick dear ones are dying. No hospital, no nursing home to be found in the land for your sick children, your mothers, your infirm

old people. The Social Democrats know all this. But they tell you: the country has no money; patience, patience, patience!

Open your eyes, ye poor and down-trodden! Look to the Semmering! Can you see there the giant hotels and sanatoriums? Can you see on the mountain slopes the hundreds of magnificent villas? There they live, those who suck million profits out of the arduous toil of your busy hands! There the drones live a life of ease and pleasure!

Away with the exploiters! Away with the drones of life!

In with your sick children, your sick mothers, your infirm old people!

Do you think that this Parliament will ever put down such laws? Never, never! Neither would the Social Democrats if they had the majority there. In fact, they already had the majority in the old Assembly! And yet you have remained the exploited! This Parliament has been created by the exploiters; it can have no other policy but that of a party of exploiters! Those who tell you different are swindlers, or they deceive themselves and you. And yet—  
**WE COMMUNISTS WANT TO GET INTO THIS PARLIAMENT!**

We Communists want to show you, on every question or measure which comes before that House for consideration, that the Conservatives and the Nationalists care for nothing except the moneybags of the exploiters. We want to show you that they deceive you at every turn, that the very crumbs they throw at you are merely so much dust in your eyes, and—that the Social Democrats are favouring this policy of exploitation.

We want to show you, by practical example, that only an administration can be of any real USE TO YOU wherein the exploiters have nothing to say and nothing to decide—in one word, from which the exploiters have been driven once for all.

But only as a majority will a Council of the REVOLUTIONARY working class—elected into the present Parliament by really class-conscious workers—be able to snatch the power from the exploiters and place at your disposal the army, the gendarms, the legal machinery, the administration, the school and the press.

Only such a Council of representatives of the REVOLUTIONARY workers will be able to take from the exploiters the mines, the factories, the large estates, the forests, the railways, and the ships, and place them in YOUR HANDS—in the hands of those who work—that they may wield them for the benefit of the whole community instead of for the benefit of a few idlers.

Only a Socialist Government will lay the

foundation for a community of workers, by first of all breaking the opposition of the exploiters and holding them down until their acquiescence in the new order of things has been secured and assured.

Only by sending men into this Parliament who will have no other aim but the ABOLITION OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF PRIVATE PROPERTY IN THE MEANS OF LIFE, will your interests be served, and will you be able to organise production on a new basis, in the interest of all who work, evolving order out of chaos, and bringing about a social order wherein poverty, privilege, and oppression will find no place, and wherein all may lead a full, free, and joyous existence.

Workers in field and factory, Workers of all grades, if you want to free yourselves from the oppression of capitalism, then you must break the power of the exploiters by common revolutionary action!

Victorious revolutionary action presupposes a CLASS-CONSCIOUS working class. You will therefore have to remove the blinkers from your eyes! It is for the purpose of making you see, in order to expose the daily practices in the political arena—the lies, the deceit, the humbug, and the misleading ways and intricacies of this sham democracy—that we want to get into this Assembly. To this end, preliminarily

**WE COMMUNISTS DEMAND YOUR VOTES.**

**MAKE AN END TO THE POLITICAL BARTER OF YOUR LIVES!**

**AN END TO THE POLICY OF CRUMBS!  
ALL VOTES FOR SOCIALISM! ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS!**

**THE MINES, THE FACTORIES, THE BIG ESTATES, THE FORESTS, THE RAILWAYS, in one word, ALL THE MEANS OF WEALTH PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION TO THE ORGANISED COMMUNITY OF THOSE WHO WORK.**

## REASON AND PRACTICABILITY.

In an article under the heading "Miners' Dilemma" the "Pall Mall and Globe" of March 23rd says:

"We shall know to-morrow whether the disposition of the Miners' Executive to admit an infusion of reason and practicability into their counsels is shared by the wider delegate body of the industry."

"Reason and practicability" to the Editor of the "Pall Mall" and the class he serves means the lowest possible wages upon which the

miners can subsist. But that which drives the miners to fight is the experiences of their past struggles to live on the wages paid to them; therefore when confronted with the drastic reductions which the coal owners offer they have no alternative to refusal to accept such terms.

They are then locked out.

These are the facts and "perception of consequences" which the miners visualise, an abnormal cut at wages, a lowering of the standard of life for themselves and their families.

The present writer has had many years experience of mining and miners, and knows the horrible and brutalising conditions under which mining people live. Surrounded by dreary and grimy pit mounds, living in an atmosphere of coal dust, which necessitates, in order to keep the home clean, continuous drudgery by the women folk, the effect on the miner's family cannot be expected to be other than degrading.

As the "Pall Mall" does not circulate among the working class the editorial seeker of "facts" no doubt feels safe in saying that "the wages of every industry must depend upon the price which the world will pay for its products."

Leaving for the moment the question of wages and prices, we have here the admission that the products of nations are placed on the world's markets for sale, and incidentally that the "community" is merely an "also ran."

When the working class fully realise that under capitalism products circulate through exchange on the world's markets, and that the capitalist national groups who own these products compete group against group, they will see how futile it is merely to organise for resistance to the effects of such competition. Instead they will organise internationally as a class for the purpose of taking possession of the political machinery, and use the political weapon to place society on a basis of social ownership and production for use.

The British coal owners, finding themselves up against severe competition from the U.S.A. and German coal owners, make their onslaught on the miners' wages.

Now the country that contains the group which is the most efficiently organised, uses up-to-date methods and machinery, is the country which competes most successfully with other countries.

Lower wages need not necessarily be paid, for wages in the U.S.A. coalfields are higher than in Britain, and the latter is at the present time beaten out of the market.

This is due to the application by the American group, of scientific methods, and the equipment of the mines with machinery for the coal face; and more accessible seams are an important factor.

There can be no doubt that in face of the American and German competition wholesale prices must fall and therefore one can see the reason of the British coal owners' agitation. Having neglected for years to improve their methods, because during those years they were assured of a market, they now wish to lay the blame on the miners by accusations in speeches and writings that "ca'canny" is practiced, whereas the facts are altogether the opposite.

Many men have been put to work at the more difficult seams, and many others have been working on extensions and explorations, for during the time the mines were controlled by the Government profits were assured and therefore there was no incentive for the mine owners to have the mines worked for output alone.

The editor of the "Pall Mall" tells us that the miner's occupation is "one of the best paid and most leisurely trades in the country." The effect of their leisure in the pits is seen when they get home, when they are utterly unable to keep awake, and fall asleep in their chairs, and often on the floor.

The laborious nature of the miners' work has been admitted by Mr. S. Tate, of the Institute of Mining Engineers, who said in the Mining Engineers' Journal (12.2.16): "In future it would be necessary that coal getting must be made easy, either by altering the methods or system of work or by installing machinery to do the strenuous part of the coal hewers' duty."

Doctor Haldane, addressing the same body, said (8.6.18): "As coal mining is a strenuous occupation, it is natural that colliers should go into some other occupation when they reach a certain age."

It should be quite evident to a thinking member of the working class that the "Pall Mall" editor with many others is merely voicing the views of those who pay him.

The master class are quite prepared to use the present world crisis for the purpose of beating down the standard of living of the working class; they wish to be prepared for the time when the surplus stocks have been sold off, and to begin the next booming period of trade and profit-reaping with cheapened labour-power.

However, the Socialist points out to the miner and other members of the working class that the aim of our class must be the abolition of the capitalist system, and the erection in its place of a system of society based on the common ownership of the instruments and means of wealth production and distribution. When that is accomplished there will be an end to all class struggles, because there will be an end to classes, and mankind will arise from the evil dreams of the past to the realisation of a sane, noble and free existence. J. M. D.

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Mattheu-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Com'tee. Applications to General Secy.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Secy., 142 Bulwar-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigdon-rd. Schools, opposite Hackney Downs Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Weds, Working Mens Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., E. Scotcher, 48 Tintern-st., Hanley, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to J. Lachlan, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Sec., J. Lloyd, 192 Chapel-st., Chester-rd., Hulme Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8, at Exmouth-St. Schools (L.C.C.), Hampstead-rd., N.W. Communications to W. F. Tickner, 51 High-rd., Willesden-green, N.W.10.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Secy., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Secy., 62 Haverhill-rd., Balham, S.W.12. Branch meets Fridays at 143 Beechcroft-rd., Upper Tooting at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secy., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd.' S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Secy., 119 Chingford-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Secy., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mayes-rd., N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS  
LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 3.30 p.m.  
Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m.  
Tooting Broadway, Junction Garrett-le. 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Parliament Hill, 3.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 8.30 a.m. Stratford, Vicarage-l. 7.30

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Tuesdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE]

## "FACING THE FACTS."

"AN APPEAL TO EXPERIENCE."

Nearly every exponent of new and old political and economic teachings now-a-days invariably commences his address with phrases similar to the above title and sub-title. But few of them really face facts, while for most of them experience is merely a superficial representation of accepted paradoxes.

### "Truth and Freedom" !

An organisation calling itself "The League of Truth and Freedom" has recently issued a pamphlet entitled : "The Teaching of experience applied to Labour and Capital," in which it is claimed that the truth is arrived at by facing facts and learning from experience. A bold display is made of this claim. On the cover we read in italics :

"Now it is evident that, if this country is going to become a better and happier country in the future, when dealing with great social problems, we must face facts and give up advocating what disagrees with them. We cannot afford to adopt any teaching that does not agree with experience."

After this bold declaration one would expect to find every statement, after careful elimination of non essentials, simple, direct, and in accordance with facts; the actual truth and nothing but the truth. But what do we find?

On page 3 we read : "Nature makes classes, but does not make individual units alike, much less her greatest handiwork, MAN."

### Facts to Face.

But Nature does not make classes in the sense implied here. She does not even make a parasitic class in the sense that she makes parasites in general, because a parasitic class in human society assumes and maintains its dominant position consciously. Classes are the result of social relationships that appear in the historical development of society. Before there can be a

dominant class there must be a general recognition of similar interests, and a conscious movement by those concerned to obtain power. The class thus coming to the top use their newly acquired power to complete their victory over their predecessors and take over complete control of the enslaved lower orders.

### A Natural Corollary.

But if we accept the dictum that Nature makes classes it is necessary that we should at the same time recognise that Nature makes also revolutions to break down classes—a fact that the league would do well to face. It explains the so-called unrest and discontent among the workers. That discontent, with the growing knowledge and organisation of the working class, is a revolution in the making. History is a record of revolutions and will continue to be so while society is divided into classes.

"We are none of us alike" is a marvellous discovery, repeated again on pages 15 and 16 and amplified as follows :

"People have been blaming Capitalists and Employers for this Fact, and for the Inequalities in Life that result from it. They have not understood that *Nature has created these inequalities*; that they are even necessary for Existence. If an Idle Man is to have the same award as an Industrious Man, then the whole World would soon be Idle."

### God's Emancipation.

In other words, it is Nature who makes some men rich and others poor, consequently the poor must not blame the rich for their poverty, even though they can prove that the rich obtain their riches by robbery. This is quite a simple way of dodging facts, while at the same time conveying the impression that one is going right down to the roots of the subject. Instead of blaming God—as the parson has always been

afraid to do—they blame Nature for the inequalities and thank their lucky stars that they are on the right side of the hedge. The league makes a fetish of Nature, not because it comprises all things, but because, at the moment it favours their class. There would be just as much—and as little—sense in saying that luck makes rich and poor. Just as the parson and his followers have always attributed what they could not understand to God, so the league attribute to Nature what they dare not explain and leave the workers to imagine that in some vague way Nature makes men rich or poor in much the same way as it makes them tall or short, thin or fat. In this way the league, while admitting the existence of classes, make no attempt to explain, to excuse, or to justify them. They merely evade in the most transparent and cowardly manner one of the facts they make so much pretence of facing.

#### Who gets the Toffee-Apple?

The last part of the above quotation, "If an idle man is to have the same award as an industrious man, the whole world would soon be idle," is intended as a sneer of contempt at the average worker. In reality it vividly reveals the true nature of capitalist society by denying a fact that is obvious to everyone—that it is the idle shareholder who gets the award, the industrious worker providing it and getting nothing. Under capitalism those who live on rent, interest, and profits can, if they choose, remain idle all their lives. If they work at all they usually choose an occupation more or less in the nature of a hobby. They are not compelled to work for a living. The working class, however, as the name implies, must work, and as the capitalists among them own the raw materials and the tools, the workers must sell their labour-power to them.

Machine production tends to reduce the bulk of the workers to one dead level of skill and wages; nevertheless they are graded and priced according to their skill, or the service they can render. The most significant fact about this grading is that those who are lowest in the scale work the hardest, often mentally as well as physically, while receiving the lowest wages.

#### The Real Idlers.

Generally speaking, the capitalist class is an idle class. Here and there a big capitalist makes a brave show of directing and supervising—drawing a fat salary in addition to his dividend for it. His speciality is, of course, making a brave show rather than directing. The office boy could often do it equally well, as it largely consists of giving reports—prepared by managers and clerks—to shareholders' meetings and to Press reporters. Where he has to exercise

judgment his managers see that their reports convey directions that influence him without offending his dignity by anything that looks like advice.

Then there are the small capitalists who cannot afford to pay managers. They look after their businesses themselves, until they are broken in competition with the big concerns. Then, rather than work as wage-slaves, they shoot themselves, so much do they love work. Outside the fancy reasoning of the league, in real life, facing the facts and learning from experience we find that those who work the hardest get the poorest award, while those who do nothing but chase pleasure find their wealth increasing faster than they can spend it.

#### And if they do—

Knowing the workers' award, we can appreciate fully the league's next statement: "some save money and become capitalists." Before a man can save money, however, he must have it to save, and as the bulk of the workers only get sufficient in wages, per week, to replace the energy they use up and provide for their dependents, very few indeed can save enough to become capitalists, even in a small way. Usually, even these few, after a severe struggle against the competition of the big capitalists, lose what they have saved and are flung back into the ranks of the working class.

Next the league's pamphlet says: "Mankind in general has always specialised and divided the work, because by doing so it can be done much quicker and better." This is easily seen to be a perversion of historical truth. Division of labour has only appeared and developed in the history of mankind with the recognition and development of new and more complicated methods of production, caused by the progressive discovery and application of fresh tools and materials.

#### A Sight for Sore Eyes.

Then follow a number of things done by capital, according to the league. "It takes capital to erect the work and supply the furnaces. . . . To build houses, the bricklayer has to get a capitalist to make and bring him bricks, and cement, and timber and slates." To say that a bricklayer would be astonished if he saw a capitalist doing anything of the kind, is to put it mildly. Every worker knows perfectly well that it is other workers who fetch him materials and tools, make and prepare these things ready for the operation he performs, and erect buildings and machinery for the purpose. With the exception of the few instances already quoted the capitalist does nothing beyond drawing and enjoying the dividends that result from the sale of the workers' product.

When all these workers understand that

capital is an unnecessary factor in production, that capitalists are parasites living on the results of their industry, they will abolish the system and establish in its place one in which everyone participates in the labour necessary to satisfy social requirements, without the existence of a class who rule solely in their own interests. In this way they will be facing facts.

#### Brains a Working-Class Possession.

Another fact that trips the league is "Brains." The bricklayer, they say, is dependent on the architect, the man of brains, who has to design the houses. Of course, that is his job. Brick-laying is the bricklayer's job, and if he did not build the houses would remain on paper. Designing is the form of labour-power the architect brings to the labour market. The difference between him and the bricklayer is not an essential one; the latter gets wages; the former commission. In both cases it is payment for service, unlike profit, which is the proceeds of robbery.

Next the league try to make us believe that labour-saving methods and machinery create more employment. They speak of the "enormous benefit that a creator of industry like Ford of America has been to Labour. At the present time Ford claims to be producing and selling three thousand motor cars per day—Think of the labour given employment by such a huge industry."

But this is only a part of the story, which is continued in the "Daily News," April 25th, as follows:

#### "CONDITIONS IN AMERICA."

"The verdict of employers is unanimous that output per person has increased. One illustration of this is furnished by Henry Ford.

When manufacturing 100,000 cars a month last year, Ford employed 52,000 persons. He now employs 32,000 to make 87,000 cars a month."

In the face of facts like this the league should either change its title or withdraw the statement quoted above. The figures from the "Daily News" speak for themselves, but the league's figures, to put it politely, amount to suppression by selection. The figures that support their argument are taken, and those that smash their case are left.

#### Capitalism Creates Unemployment.

In its normal development, therefore, capitalism increases unemployment, because production is only carried on for markets. The workers can only satisfy their needs by wages earned in the production of commodities for these markets. It is apparent, therefore, that markets must be limited, consequently that the number of jobs is limited, and that, with the

adoption of new machinery and methods, the number of workers unable to satisfy their needs must increase. These latter are not prevented from doing so by the lack of materials and machinery, but solely by virtue of the fact that the capitalist refuses to produce for anything but markets.

#### The Surest Thing.

The league see in all this not competition between capitalists for world markets, but competition between the working class of different countries for their capture. What they do see, however, is that the working class of any country, if they are not to be starved out of existence by unemployment, must be prepared to accept a standard of living as low as, or lower than, the present lowest. There is no denying this. The hunger of the capitalist for cheap labour is about the surest thing under capitalism. First women and then children were dragged into industry because they were cheaper than men. Wherever the capitalist has been able to do so he has dragged in cheap native labour to compete with his own countrymen, while at the same time mouthing patriotism. The hypocrisy of the capitalist is well expressed in the following paragraphs, which are typical of the general attitude:

"It is perhaps fortunate for the labour of this country, that capital and brains are so hindered by officialism in China, that they cannot at present give effective help to Chinese manufacturing, agriculture, and mining industries. For the Chinaman lives almost entirely on rice, and if he had the capital and the brains to help him, which we possess, his low standard of life and consequent low prices would under-sell us in every market in the world."

It is quite evident from the above that the average capitalist has no objection to developing Chinese trade so long as his capital is in the business. It is not love of his country that hinders him, but Chinese officialdom.

#### The League's "Truth."

Perhaps the worst lie uttered by the League of Truth and Freedom is the statement that "although the cost of food and other necessities has increased so greatly, the wages paid, except perhaps in isolated cases, have more than covered it." Every worker knows that his standard of living is lower than it was in 1914. Many articles of food, such as butter, eggs, bacon, beef, and most kinds of fruit, that entered largely into his diet before the war, are looked upon as luxuries to-day by the average worker, while for many they are absolutely unobtainable.

Then we are told that "the best men among the capitalists and the employers are anxious to

help labour to improve its position" (apparently by reducing wages all round and speeding up). "They recognise that this country has in the past been run far too much for the benefit of the indolent and the idle."

And that is as much as we can expect from the league. Out for "truth and freedom," they stand only for the freedom of the capitalist class to continue their exploitation of the workers. They admit the workers' poverty, but their only remedy is, when translated, deeper poverty and more intensified labour. If the workers allow themselves to be led by such transparent hypocrisy and lies they deserve nothing better.

F. F.

#### THE FOURTH ESTATE—Continued.

in these columns more often, perhaps, than his importance deserves. One would guarantee that if he were to write a true article about the sufferings of old, toil-worn human animals thrown on the industrial scrap-heap because capitalism has no further use for them, and to tell the readers of the "Sunday Chronicle" that it is because one small section (the section that pays him for writing) of society owns the machinery of wealth production and distribution and can and does treat the remainder of society (the working class) worse than horses—if he were to do this, I repeat, then one could guarantee that R.B. would get the sack, not only from the "Sunday Chronicle," but from any other capitalist periodical.

But, as you must be aware, Bob has discovered long since that writing for the Capitalist Press pays, so he is not likely to blow the gaff on them.

On the same page we get a very usual type of journalese, the short, snappy type. It is remarkable, you workers, your masters don't believe you have the intelligence to handle long paragraphs, so they jerk them to you in small doses! Jane Doe has been working in a mill (she didn't wear the pretty frock she is posing in-at the top, I think!) She thinks it is a jolly fine idea. And so do the mythical mill girls she quotes. They can go to sleep in the work time if they wish—and often do, mark you! And as one remarks over a dish of Irish stew and a jug of tea in the card room, "We're not in a prison and we get plenty of fun."

There's a lot more like this I could quote did I "feel so disposed," but it will suffice if I just tell Jane Doe (although I hate to have to speak like this to a lady) she's a liar. Still, to give credit where possible, I will admit that she has the excuse that she does it for her living.

The facts are nearly all contrary to Jane's statements. I need only ask anyone who lives

or works in a cotton mill environment whether I am right when I say in contradiction to Jane Doe that mill life is unhealthy; its victims are not, as a general rule, healthy, plump, and so on. Their teeth are *not* good (I think she says "splendid"); in fact they are far, far from it. The mills they work in are like prisons, and even worse. They do *not* sleep in their work time if they choose. And last, their homes are as a general rule, not the little heavens of comfort and restfulness Jane Doe would have us believe.

If the verbose lady doubts this point the present writer will himself conduct her down dozens of streets in industrial Lancashire where the "mill lasses" and their husbands prefer to sit outside on the pavement, rather than endure the discomfort and foulness of their living rooms. And I can further assure her that if she is not squeamish she can be shown worse sights, and can hear worse sounds, than she dare ask her masters to publish or than her refined mind could contemplate without revulsion. But Jane is like Bobby, I suspect! Master pays better than truth!

On page 2 is an article in dialect written in praise of Jane and her boasting of the Lancashire cotton girls' supposed idyllic existence, all written with the express purpose of counteracting the effect of propaganda that attempts to expose the vileness of the present industrial system.

It is on page 2 too that we strike a pathetic note. One who signs himself "Country Parson" is bewailing the vanishing of feudalism and the spirit that taught us—

"God bless the Squire and his relations,  
And keep us in our proper stations."

He tears our heart strings with the news that the Earl is forced by the crises of to-day to sell his hunters, to reduce his staff of retainers, and to close a wing of the ancient baronial castle. But he relents in the last paragraph and wakes us to hope again with the happy declaration that the yeomen of England are proof against the virus of Communist propaganda and the tracts and pamphlets that are pushed under his doors, generally after dusk, which they know are written by drawing room intellectuals and are paid for by foreigners! And he prophesies in a confident peroration that "the staunchness and integrity of the yeomen which won for them the title 'the backbone of England' may yet assert itself again."

Now one could go on from page to page, from paper to paper, quoting the virus of capitalism that our masters seek to infect us with. Just as in the Army they inoculated us to guard against the ravages of fever, so they inoculate

us with the insidious propaganda we have instanced to guard against the ravages of clear and logical reasoning. For they know the mighty intelligence of the working class that enables it to produce the wealth of the world, can only be divorced from the intelligence of class-consciousness by the constant repetition by paid hucksters of fine words and maudlin sentiments such as are drivelled by our Robert Blatchfords, our Jane Does, and our "Country Parsons."

In conclusion, it is for the working class to read between the lines and search out the truth for themselves, and to throw to the ground the pillars of hypocritical "poppycock" which form the foundations on which capitalism stands, and to build upon the place where it stood a social edifice which has for its architect Intelligence and for its purpose the common weal.

S.

#### JOTTINGS.

Reading the Press from day to day we are kept fully informed of the plots that are hourly discovered and which are intended—so we are usually told—to undermine the edifice of the British Constitution and to bring to ruin and decay the civilisation upon which rests our "glorious Empire." Full details have been collected of Sinn Fein plots in England, Irish plots in Russia, German plots in Palestine, Jewish plots in Germany, Communist plots in Timbuctoo, and so on without end.

Lord Birkenhead (famous for his connection with the Ulster plot) was telling the Cotton Conference at Manchester the other day what he knew about the plot of the Bolsheviks to extend the coal strike in England to a general stoppage. After referring to the source of information as "detected intercepted documents," he went on to pay a tribute to the "traditional commonsense of the British people," and to say that owing to the "sanity and sobriety of the British working man" the sinister plot had been shattered, and, he hoped, shattered beyond recall. "However misguided the miners may have been, their loyalty to their leaders and endurance typified the spirit of loyalty and determination which enabled Great Britain to make such a special contribution to the winning of the war." ("Manchester Guardian," June 23, 1921.)

The reader will at once conclude that this sounds fishy, and that there must be something behind it all. Of course there is. Turning to another part of the same paper we find in the political correspondent's report that a conspiracy had been revealed which was led by Lord Birkenhead and included Churchill, Lord

Beaverbrook, and others, the purpose of which was the overthrow of the Prime Minister in order to alter the basis of the Coalition. In this case also the plot was shattered—not because of the "traditional commonsense of the British people," but because Churchill did not see his way clear to success.

The connection between the two instances is obvious. Everything depends upon being able to secure the support of the working-class population of the country by means of their votes, hence the talk at Manchester and the Press reports.

Which is bluff, purely and simply. For their own purposes they have other methods, also, which are not supposed to be the concern of those outside. The British workers may possess those qualities attributed to them by Lord Birkenhead, but they will certainly have to be applied in a different direction if they are ever going to come into their own.

\* \* \*

The dishing of the Communists by the Labour Party over the question of affiliation to that body will certainly rile them. In seeking affiliation they not only prove that, stripped of all their pseudo-revolutionary trappings, they are nothing but a party of opportunist reformers, but also that they haven't a platform strong enough to stand on. Their understanding of Socialism is certainly in need of a tonic when they claim that by joining forces with the anti-Socialist left wing of Liberalism they can better serve the interests of the workers. That exhortation to the trade unionists to "watch your leaders" is really funny.

\* \* \*

Lever Brothers, Ltd. report a profit of £3,270,091 in 1920, after providing for depreciation, insurance, etc. This compares with £2,439,067 in 1919. The fixed dividends on the preference and the preferred ordinary shares are to be paid, and the ordinary, held by the Lever family, will have 20 per cent. paid on them, absorbing £456,000. This is 2½ more than in 1919. Not very bad considering these rotten times.

\* \* \*

Some little time ago the Editor of "John o' London" invited well-known people to state in his journal what particular book they would place in the hands of a young man of 21 in the belief that it would tend to form both his mind and character to his life-long advantage. Lord Leverhulme was one of those who was invited to have a shot. He replied—you've guessed it—Smiles' "Self Help"!

TOM SALA,

## ON "CONTROL."

Despite the open and covert ruling-class propaganda, the careful provision of spectacular demonstration, the frantic endeavour to interest the workers in these things that concern only the capitalist class (Irish ferment, Indian disaffection, and the like), the past few years have witnessed ever-increasing economic strife, ever increasing hostility on the part of the workers to the existing social order.

If we consider the struggles of the last five years, a time of trade boom and slump, it is plain that the gains do not balance the losses: the workers enjoy a reduced standard of living.

Current events show that the most powerful trade union organisation is weak compared to the might of the master class. All the trade union action we have witnessed has not sufficed to maintain the workers' pre-war standard of living. Yet it is proposed to oppose this paltry machinery to the organised force of the master class. How? In the industrial strife we have noted demands were backed up by the cessation of work. To enforce these new political demands some would stay in while others would have a general strike to get "control," while on every hand we have schemes whereby the workers will progressively become dominant in the workshop.

Mr. John Hill, General Secy. United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders, outlines some such scheme in his monthly report to his members quoted by the "Labour Leader," 22.4.1921.

Dealing with the coal lock-out Mr. Hill lays down his scheme. "The miners," he says, "have met the first attack in the only honourable way when national negotiations were refused. In certain eventualities we may take the same course, and we may win; but we cannot beat the international capitalists by a strike here and there. We must get control of the workshops. We must get control of our municipalities. We must get control of the nation."

"This will take time and education and discipline."

"There is no need of machine guns to secure these things."

Our trade union official does not in any way elaborate his plan or inform us how it is to be established. The object of workshop control is to restrain or check the injurious effect of modern industry on the workers.

According to its advocates, workshop control can be established in two ways—

(1) Bit by bit, following the policy of harassing the employers, or

(2) "Taking and holding," following the policy of drastic action on the industrial field.

The fact is usually lost sight of that, at the present day, the entire running of industry is carried on by the workers.

Concerning those schemes that come under the first group the reader is reminded of an occurrence in Italy in August and September, 1920. The workers there seized many factories, the masters preferring to let things take their course rather than damage valuable property. Had the Italian masters so minded the factories and the workers in them would have been blown across the Rubicon.

The inevitable happened. No wages forthcoming, the affair fizzled out. The Government however, with an eye to the main chance promised to introduce a bill that would inaugurate workers control committees. This they afterwards did.

The Government bill laid down that the committees should function in practically all large concerns except those of State. "Workers who are devoted to each category of the larger industries, and who have reached their majority, will elect on the proportional system a Commission of Control comprising nine members. Six of these members will be chosen by the rank-and-file, and the remaining three by the engineers, higher employees, and technical managers engaged in that particular industry."—"Daily Chronicle," 26.1.21.

The "Daily Herald" (26.1.21), under the heading "Official Powers given to shop stewards," supplements the above. "Employers in each industry will also elect a committee of nine members for the purpose of treating with the workers' committee. . . . A workmen's committee has the right to have all information necessary to establish the cost of raw material, the cost of production, and the methods of administration and production. . . . also information concerning the salaries paid to workmen, how the capital is constituted, and details respecting mechanical equipment, as well as the manner in which the rules governing employment and discharge of workers are carried out."

In these Italian control committees the workers have a representation equal to that of their masters. How did the masters take it?

"From hurried enquiries I have made to-night, I find factory owners fiercely opposed to the extent of control outlined above. Many declare they will go into liquidation rather than submit to the provisions of the Bill."—"Daily Chronicle," 26.1.21.)

With such an extent of control and such opposition doubtless effects are far-reaching. But listen! "Its objects are explained as aiming at Ameliorating the technical instruction of the

workers, and their moral and economic status within the limits permitted by the conditions in which manufacturers carry on their tasks.

"Ensuring the execution of the whole body of laws framed for the protection of the toiling classes."

"Facilitating betterment in methods of production, with a view to making production itself more fruitful and economical."

"Rendering more and more normal and peaceful the relations between the givers and undertakers of labour."—"Daily Chronicle," 26.1.21.)

The results of such control are painfully obvious. The "limits of the conditions in which manufacturers carry on their tasks" are the limits of production for profit. "Ameliorating the technical instruction of the workers" means more capable workmen; "more economical and fruitful production" implies a great increase in the army of unemployed. The carrying out of factory laws, etc. is necessarily a protection of capitalism itself, quite as much as old age pensions, unemployment doles, and hospitals. As to the "peaceful relations," there have been strikes almost daily since.

With regard to those schemes that fall under the second heading, it is necessary for Mr. Hill or his apostles to show how it is possible for the would-be controllers to combat the forces that would be set in motion by those who have political power. "No need for machine guns"—but let Mr. Hill attempt to run the boiler-making industry against the will of the masters. The machine guns would be there, and so would the artillery, and the tanks, and the poison gas if required, prepared to proceed to any extreme at the behest of those who hold political power.

Workshop control schemes, like profit-sharing and bonus systems, will only be put into operation at the command and with the consent of the master class, and therefore only in their interests.

To secure the second proposition there is only one way. When any body wishes to be represented in local government affairs it places its representatives before the electorate at the appointed times, and if returned in a majority, decides the course to be pursued in local affairs. The rub is here. Local government bodies are very much limited in their powers. Further, measures decided upon can be overturned, functions can be absolutely crippled by the severe restraint exercised by the central governing body—Parliament. Just one instance: "The Local Legislation Committee of the House of Commons have refused by a majority vote to allow the Wigan Corporation to establish a Municipal Savings Bank." ("Local Government Chronicle," 21.5.21.

What would be the fate of any local government measure that attempted to hinder production for profit?

Of Mr. Hill's third proposition little need be said. How the workers are to get "control of the nation" our mentor does not tell us. He would have the workers concern themselves with local government, burial boards, and workhouses. But that central government machinery that can decide control schemes, local government action, the action of the armed forces, etc. he contemptuously dismisses, grouping political action with religious bigotry as "dividing the workers."

Production for profit respects only the law of its own undivided sway. The wage slave can no more dictate to the capitalist the terms of wage slavery than the serf could dictate to the feudal lord the conditions of serfdom. The capitalist class own the instruments of wealth production. More than this, and with the consent of the workers, they have political power, and through this ensure their own dominance as a ruling class.

Political power enables the master class to preserve intact the vital structure, the vital functioning of this system. It enables them to say that the propertyless shall protect the means of production, the property of the master class, from any and every attack. Political power carries with it the control of that brute force usually hidden but so necessary to maintain class rule.

Workers control or any other reform that can possibly be mentioned, implies the continuance of capitalism, the continued dominance of the capitalist class. Workers' control is absolutely useless to the workers while the capitalist class own the means and instruments of wealth production and distribution.

The workers must wrest from the ruling class the political power, and wield it in their own interest. Only a revolutionary working class can do this, and can use this power to one end alone: the abolition of capitalism and the institution of Socialism.

Let us renounce, therefore, all thoughts of reforms, no matter by what alluring title they may be known; let us resolutely refuse to be beguiled by side issues, no matter by whom they may be displayed; let us work for the only thing that matters, the institution of that form of society wherein every man's labour shall belong to the community, every man's needs shall be the concern of the community, every mental and physical gift that history has given to the sons and daughters of man shall radiate to the happiness of the whole of the community and the fulness of human life. A. H.

**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

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**The Socialist Standard,**

FRIDAY,



JULY 1, 1921.

**FELONY COMPOUNDED.**

Another Government pledge has gone by the board. Agriculture has been decontrolled. There is no great outcry among the farmers, for very obvious reasons. In the first place a compromise is effected in their interests, and they are going to get some £15,000,000. The Government is bragging of having made a good bargain by compounding; the farmers, beyond a little very weak eye-wash, make no complaint of loss: where, then, does the shoe pinch?

It is simple: exactly where one who knows his way about in the fog would expect. It is the agricultural worker, of course, who is to feel the pinch.

For with the decontrol is, it seems, to be abolished the machinery for regulating the wages of the land workers. Hence the latter are to be thrown into the cockpit, like the rest of the workers, to fight out the question of wages in the good, old-fashioned way: with the raw'uns so to speak.

The farmers, therefore, besides getting rid of the irksome conditions of the late Agricultural Act, are freed from the restrictions on the movement of wages. By this they know that they will gain more than they will lose by the Government's repudiation of their guarantees; hence they take it lying down.

The land workers' side of the picture is not pleasant to look upon. The wonderful advance of machinery has made them superabundant, in spite of the ravages made in their ranks by the war. Already large numbers who left the land to work in the factories, having been thrown in the gutter to starve, are returning to the coun-

tryside to clamour for jobs that do not exist. In addition, with the towns teeming with unemployed, there is no avenue of escape in that direction. So they are in a bad position indeed to offer effective resistance to the pending attack upon their wages.

To get back to the Government, it is very illuminating how one after the other they have stripped from the wage slaves the "favours" or concessions they conferred upon them when they had got the "wind up." There is not much left now. It would not be a far step to the repudiation of all war pensions, and that would about complete the business. Perhaps we shall not have to wait long for that!

**ATTENTION!**

Will those interested in the formation of a branch of the Party in Earlsfield and Wandsworth please communicate with L. W. Palmer, 390 Merton Rd., Southfields, S.W.18.

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EXTRACT FROM  
**'THE COMPLEAT  
SOCIALIST.'**

Continued.

Being a Discourse not Unworthy of the  
Perusal of Most Reformers.

Reformer. No Party. Socialist.

Soc.—I have promised to show you an alternative to Reform, and I mean to catechise you for it. I pray you tell me, did not you, Mr. No Party, declare these same countries which shelter so much poverty to stand among the richest?

No P.—That I did, sir, and this is known by us all.

Soc.—And next you shall tell me, in what form their wealth appears?

REF.—Why, sir, in the shape of commodities of all kinds.

Soc.—True. And I would know who owns the greater part of them, since we are all very sure the workers do not.

No P.—Your questions are easily answered, sir. It is those employers whom Mr. Reformer called "masters."

Soc.—I suppose then that they by far outnumber the workers?

REF.—Nay, sir, they are but a handful by comparison!

Soc.—And do they put all these commodities to their own use?

No P.—No indeed, they sell them.

Soc.—To what uses, then, do they put those monies which come to them from the sale?

No P.—Oh, sir, with some they supply both necessities and all manner of luxuries to themselves; and the residue they invest in further business of production.

Soc.—Still you answer well; I commend you. Now, I pray, did these employers themselves create this wealth which they are so happy as to possess?

REF.—Marry, no, sir: most of them created not the smallest part of it.

Soc.—Then since wealth does not fall from clouds like rain, nor is not found upon the grass like manna, whence came it?

REF.—The labour of the workers, e'en those of whom I discoursed, produced it.

Soc.—Well said; but you must needs show from what material, for we know that even prodigious toil cannot win steel from moonbeams or wool from the wind.

REF.—Sooth, bounteous Nature yields the materials.

Soc.—Is it e'en so! Now instruct me how the employers do continue to persuade the workers

to produce for them; the which is the more amazing for that they return to the producers a share so exceeding meagre.

REF.—Oh, sir, you must know that the workers cannot live but by serving the employers.

Soc.—Can they not? Why do they not exercise their labour upon Nature's materials for their own benefit?

REF.—Because in doing this they must use tools, machines, factories, locomotives, steamships, and so forth, all of which we call means of production and transport, and these do the employers possess. Therefore the workers may by no means come near them except in serving their masters on terms specified.

Soc.—And it is plainly to be discerned who sets forth the terms, for we know it is not pleasant to the wage-earners to receive so poor a share and to work so many hours in the day.

No P.—Aye marry, the terms never differ but in little from what the employers offer, yet why they do not I cannot clearly perceive.

REF.—Oh, it is because the number of hungry workers wishing to be hired is nearly always greater than the number which the masters do wish to hire, the which I mentioned a while ago. Therefore can the masters say: "Thus and thus are the terms, and if one of you will not accept them, your fellow must."

Soc.—Well done, scholars mine! You answer each the other. Now I suppose at least the capitalists themselves produced the means of production, by owning the which they are able so to enslave the workers?

No P.—Nay! The workers produced them too.

REF.—Aye truly—by bringing their labour to Mother Earth.

Soc.—Then it does not appear how they own not these!

REF.—Oh, the reason is that the very land belongs to the masters.

Soc.—Then do the workers possess nothing whatsoever, excepting their power to labour?

REF.—Alas, nothing.

Soc.—And the capitalists possess everything—land, means of production, and therefore all wealth produced, above that small amount which they do grudgingly return to the workers, to reproduce in them that life and strength which they purpose to use again.

No P.—Thus matters stand indeed.

Soc.—Now see you not, honest friend, the very root of those material evils which you did so lament?

REF.—Yes, for it doth plainly appear that they all grow from the ownership by capitalists of the means of living.

Soc.—And do you begin to perceive in your

bitter harvest of hatreds a reflection of material conditions, chiefest of which are the economic relations of capitalist production?

No P.—Why, I do, in so far as class antagonism is concerned: a class struggle could not but arise where the interests of employers and employed are thoroughly opposite.

REF.—And I have declared already how competition among workers makes them hate each other, which competition we have seen is a feature of capitalist production.

No P.—Even so. And now I bethink me, the bitterness of the workers in belligerent lands is to be ascribed to this same cause; for I remember that each war hath proved to have been fought on questions of masters' interests, and it is to defend these that the workers have been roused to enmity, who else had no quarrel whatsoever.

Soc.—So much for their ideal sorrows. And what of the aesthetic blindness, which denied to so many workers any joy in art?

REF.—Why, that indeed is a weed from the same vile root; for how should men and women live in such wise as workers do, and yet remain alive to those profound and subtle sensations which the artist labours to awake? Sensitive minds in a sordid environment pay for their joys in bitter suffering.

No P.—Besides, you are to bear in mind how the workers' education concerns itself not at all to foster appreciation of art: such responsiveness is not necessary to an efficient typist or engineer.

REF.—True; and I remember how great artists very oft starve, though why our masters, who have leisure and wealth enough, neglect to reward them and enjoy their creations, I cannot discern.

No P.—I can, and that readily! For the ruling class in capitalist society is much made up of men successful in capitalist industry; the which success prerequisites mental qualities very different from those which distinguished lovers of art and is achieved and maintained by an unremitting recognition of self- and class-interest. The only kind of "art" which seemeth to them good is that which can be made the servant of their ideas; but the greatest art serves not one class or section, but is for all people and all times a common treasure and a link.

Soc.—Now see how far a little thinking hath carried you! I warrant you now perceive, Mr. Reformer, why your reforms fulfilled not your high hopes of them.

REF.—I confess I do. For they were directed on the one hand to changing the ideas and tastes of the workers, apart from the material conditions out of which these grew; and on the other to improving their material state while

leaving the worker still enslaved to the capitalist, so that if the former should gain some small advantage to-day, the latter had but to devise some new aid to exploitation to-morrow.

Soc.—So you have satisfied yourselves, have you not, that private property in the means of living entails the subjection of the working class, and its consequent misery?

REF.—We have in sooth.

Soc.—Wherein, then, lies the remedy?

REF.—It follows straight: in the common ownership of these things.

Soc.—And how in such case ought their use to be controlled?

REF.—Oh, democratically, by the whole people!

Soc.—The achievement of which is the whole aim of Socialists, of whom I am one.

No P.—Why, I cry you thanks, Mr. Socialist! I am now become so full of eagerness that I would fain know how this transformation may be brought about.

Soc.—The matter is easily understood, scholar, and as you are so willing, let us proceed to it.

You did declare, Mr. Reformer, and we all know it for truth, that the working class doth far outnumber its masters. By what means do the capitalists retain the wealth which they have taken?

Why, the laws secure it them, and punish with rigorous penalties any who attack their possession. The army, navy, air-force and police are to be employed on such occasion.

Soc.—And who make the laws?

REF.—Those whom you and I and all voters do appoint to rule.

Soc.—And who are either masters or supporters of the same I conjecture, since they do so well defend private property.

REF.—Truly, of these two kinds they are.

Soc.—Yet they must be appointed by the votes of the workers, since these are in the majority.

REF.—Doubtless.

Soc.—In whatsoever persuasion, then, do the workers elect such rulers?

No P.—Oh, they do not yet understand, as I did not until to-day, sir, the source of their troubles.

Soc.—Now, what think you? How is it possible for the working class to expropriate its masters, and convert the means of living into common property?

REF.—By taking control of the powers of government.

Soc.—By what means can this be done?

REF.—By electing workers pledged to Socialism.

Soc.—Whose, then, is the task of achieving Socialism?

No P.—The workers' alone!

Soc.—And what deem you the most valuable service possible to-day to the cause of Socialism?

No P.—To spread knowledge of its principles within the working class.

Soc.—So think I; yet how shall we secure that Socialist action be well-disciplined and effective?

REF.—Why, as the workers grow to an understanding of Socialism they should organise in a Socialist party.

No P.—Thus the matter appears to me also; and if more consideration confirms my present view, I promise, sir, to rank myself among your fellows, and qualify as completely as may be to bear forward the welcome teaching. I pray you, tell me if there be a Socialist party in this country which dallies not with reforms, for I am resolved that I will none of them.

Soc.—I am so happy as to be able to name you, an such a party, to wit, the Socialist Party of Great Britain, some copies of whose Manifesto I have, by good fortune, in my pocket. Do you both read at your leisure, and judge of the party by what you find therein.

REF.—I, like Mr. No Party, am become full of eagerness, but hesitate to give the like promise because I fear me that until the majority of the workers understand Socialism the time is long.

Soc.—Marry, scholar, well urged! And therefore as we have now reached Rugby let me recommend you to alight. I will hand you your bag.

REF.—What counsel is this? My destination is Carlisle.

Soc.—Aye, but from here to Carlisle is four hours' journey. You were wiser to make the best of Rugby, which invites you here at hand.

REF.—You amaze me, sir! My business can be done only in Carlisle, and were it a twenty-four hours' journey, I would go thither. No other town will suit my purpose.

Soc.—Excellent, excellent! You have answered your own objection to Socialism. Nothing but Socialism will suit your purpose—which is the emancipation of the working class, is it not? Only in the Socialist Commonwealth will vanish the ills we desire to end, and however long the way may be, we must go thither. Yet it may well be that the Revolution is much nearer than you have guessed. For myself, it is my hope and my dearest wish that I may live to witness the establishment in many lands of that Commonwealth, and the expanding of the flowers of human happiness in its warmth and light; if this great joy may not be mine, I wish

I may keep health and strength to fight through many a year in its cause.

REF.—Now so say I, good friend, for my last doubt hath followed the rest.

Soc.—Your decisions right-well content me, nor do I fear that you will ever repent them.

No P.—And to lose no time, I propose that Mr. Reformer and I proceed now to read the Manifesto, thus allowing you to return to your SOCIALIST STANDARD, which I perceive you laid aside when we began to discourse.

Soc.—'Tis a match.

REF.—A match.

A.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### WHAT IS OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COMMUNIST PARTY?

Mr. Mosley, of Gedling, Nottinghamshire, writes appreciatively of the "S.S." and asks some questions. He says he could ask more. We invite him to send them along. Our editorial staff work under certain difficulties, but all questions are considered and dealt with as soon as circumstances permit.

Our correspondent's chief question is: What is the S.P.G.B.'s official attitude toward the recently formed Communist Party of Great Britain? The answer is: One of opposition. The reasons are as follows:

The Socialist shows that the master class are able to maintain and continue their rule in society because they control political power. The centre of this power is Parliament. Here the laws are made and the forces (Army, Navy, Police, etc.) are authorised and supported for the purpose of enforcing those laws, the wishes of the master class. This political power is placed in the masters' hands by the workers, as the latter possess the majority of the votes. At every election the candidates depend upon receiving a certain number of votes in every area before being elected. Except for two or three special constituencies the workers have the majority of votes in every area. Hence the necessity for the masters to obtain these votes either for themselves or for their agents, at each election.

Once in control of political power the masters can crush any attempted use of force by the workers, whether such attempt be through economic organisations or secret societies.

The only solution in line with the facts of life around us is for the workers to use the franchise to obtain political power for the purpose of achieving their emancipation. Equally clear is it that, until a majority of the workers understand their slave position and desire to alter it,

they will allow the masters to continue to rule by voting them into control of political power. Hence the stupidity of fancying that an "intelligent minority" can carry through a revolution.

At the moment of writing the Communist Party have not published a constitution of their own, but as they are affiliated to the Third (Communist) International, obviously they accept the conditions laid down for joining that body. Among those conditions are the following:

4. A persistent and systematic propaganda is necessary in the Army where Communist groups should be formed in every military unit. Wherever, owing to repressive legislation, agitation becomes legally impossible, it is necessary to conduct such agitation illegally. Refusal to carry on, or to participate in such work, should be considered a treason to the revolutionary cause and incompatible with affiliations to the Third International.

Apart from the fact that it is impossible to organise the working class secretly, there is no country in the world that allows of the formation of such groups in their fighting forces. Hence the above conditions are ordered to be applied in all countries quite irrespective of the conditions prevailing there, and of the means of propaganda that may be available in any of them. In backward countries, countries of low economic and political development, such methods may be useful, but that is a point to be settled by the people in those conditions. In countries where there is an easy, simple, safe means of seizing full power ready the hands of the workers (i.e., the franchise)—and this exists in all fully developed capitalist countries—to adopt the methods of the Third International is not only idiotic, but suicidal. Therefore all Socialists must be opposed to organisations that preach such futile methods in the latter countries.

Another reason for our opposition is that Socialism means the social ownership of the means of life. Hence the majority of society must not only be convinced of the necessity for Socialism before it can be established, but they must keep control in their own hands if social ownership is to continue. The Third International lays down a system of rule by oligarchy, for in Clause 12 of the "Conditions" it says:

In the acute period of civil war the Communist Party will be able fully to discharge its duty only if it is thoroughly well organised, if it possesses an iron discipline, and if its executive enjoys the confidence of the party members, who are to endow the Executive with full power and authority. (Italics ours.)

This is exactly the claim of all the misleaders of the working class, from the Tory politician to the Labour leader. "Trust us," they say,

"we will look after you." To give "complete power and authority" to any individual or group is to give them something they can and may sell to the enemy. The only safeguard the working class has in its fight for emancipation is to keep control and power in its own hands. Executive committees, organisers, officials, etc., paid or unpaid, must all be servants of the working class, taking their instructions from, and carrying out their orders under the control of, that class.

The policy and method of Communist Party being thus shown to be in direct contradiction to Socialist policy and methods, the Socialist organisation must be in opposition to the Communist Party. Ed. Com.

#### TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Sirs,—With reference to J.C.'s well-reasoned article in this month's "S.S." entitled "Parliamentary or Direct Action," has he not omitted to state what are the agencies which will cause the bulk of the workers to arrive at a complete understanding of their position, which understanding, he says, is necessary before Socialism can come?

The average worker unquestionably gulps down whatever ideas are pressed upon him by school, press, parson, etc. Further, he likes to think and feel exactly what everybody else in the herd thinks and feels. He is not worried in the least as to the possibility that popular ideas and emotions may be untrue, or may tend to repress life.

In point of volume, Socialist propaganda cannot be compared with capitalist propaganda. Nor, indeed, are the advocates of the former such accomplished psychologists as are the advocates of the latter. The worker's thoughts and feelings are the results of this capitalistic ideological bombardment; and in this bombardment there is no cessation.

Therefore, if the coming of Socialism depends upon the enlightenment of the majority of the workers, and their enlightenment depends alone upon Socialist teaching influencing them, it looks as though our hope of a better life is about as rosy as was the early Christians' hope of the "second coming."

Yours faithfully,

G. T. FOSTER.

#### REPLY TO G. T. FOSTER.

The last paragraph in Mr. Foster's letter contains the essence of his question when he asks if the enlightenment of the workers depends ALONE upon Socialist teaching. Nowhere does the Socialist state such a position or make such a claim. Socialist propaganda is only one

factor in the process of enlightenment. Far more powerful is the economic development with its growing insecurity of life for everyone who lives by selling his or her services to an employer. It is this great factor that usually forces workers to listen to Socialist propaganda.

In all directions, despite the denials and lies of the capitalist agents, combination among the capitalists, with its concentration of wealth into fewer hands, continues all over the world. Price associations, cartels, federations and amalgamations, finally reaching the stage of trusts, are found in every large industry. The combinations in oil, steel, cotton, and Tobacco are known to everybody, and almost as notorious is the great combination in the banking world.

A combination is formed to increase profits. This may be done by eliminating competition and so saving the portion of surplus value previously used in that direction. Result, unemployment of travellers, advertisement printers, etc. Another way is to combine like plants or branches under one control with its necessary reduction of staff, thus giving a similar result. Or the combine may decide to force either longer hours or speeding up on the workers, with the same monotonous result—unemployment.

The class division between workers and employers is more clearly shown in the case of a company than of an employer who is known personally to his workpeople. It is shown more clearly by a combination, and most clearly of all by a trust. No wage slave is sure of his job under this development, and even the lordly bank clerk and the respectable, snobbish teacher have been forced to form organisations of a trade union character to protect themselves against the worsening of their economic position and the growing insecurity of life.

Long before the Socialist propaganda will reach the majority of these people the growth of the contradictions in capitalism will have forced them to examine various supposed ways of escape, and they will be compelled to take up the study of Socialism as furnishing the only solution to these problems.

Nor is it a question of the comparative psychological accomplishments of the capitalist and Socialist propagandists, for the first merely repeat the stale tales and nostrums that are already in the workers' minds—an extremely simple thing to do—while the second have to divert the minds of the workers out of their old, well-worn grooves—a task of much greater difficulty. Eds. "S.S."

## WHERE RUSSIA STANDS.

(Continued.)

On the question of whether a Socialist Revolution is possible without, as a prerequisite, a majority of the population understanding Socialism, and being in favour of it, we have contradictory views expressed by the Bolsheviks. We will quote some opposite statement as examples of their confusion.

Lenin states on one occasion:

The first problem of any rising political party consists in convincing the majority of the population that its program and politics are correct.

The second problem of our party was the conquest of political power and the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters. ("The Soviets at Work," p. 10.)

He puts this point of view even more strongly in "Left Wing Communism," as witness the following:

Without an alteration in the views of the majority of the working class, revolution is impossible.

It follows that for the revolution it is essential first that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for a revolution, and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it. (Page 65.)

If the above quotations have any meaning at all they surely signify that, before the workers can conquer political power, there must be a majority understanding Socialism and in favour of it. In other words, there must be a majority of class conscious workers.

Were we of a guileless and trusting disposition we would accept the above evidence that Lenin was against minority action—Blanquism. But alas! we are critical, and so we find that Lenin in other writings took up exactly the opposite point of view.

Under the heading "Elections to the Constituent Assembly" the following appeared in the "Workers' Dreadnought," 21.8.20:

This is a process which the representatives of the Second International have never been able to understand, namely that the proletariat can be victorious without conquering a majority of the population. To limit or condition this victory to the acquisition of a majority of votes at an electoral contest under bourgeois domination is evidence of chronic intellectual indolence, or else, quite simply, of a device to deceive the workers. In order to bring the majority over to its side, the proletariat must first overthrow the bourgeoisie and take possession of the power of government, and then, after having destroyed the old state apparatus, introduce the Soviet system, whereby the domination and authority of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats over the non-proletarian labouring masses is at once nullified. It must finally complete the destruction of the influence of the bourgeoisie

and petty-bourgeois democrats over the majority of the non-proletarian labouring masses by satisfying their economic needs in a revolutionary manner, at the expense of the exploiters.

Lenin, in the above quotation, states in effect that first of all a minority of the workers must conquer political power and then induce the majority of the workers to come over to their side. In the previous extract, however, he states that first of all we must have a majority in favour of Socialism and then conquer political power. He tries to have both ways, and is on this account self-convicted of being wrong in one attitude or the other.

On this particular point it was left to a gas-bag to put the finishing touch to the absurdity. In "The Development of Socialism from Science to Practice" Karl Radek stated:

The notion that the proletariat should undertake no revolution until it is satisfied that it has the majority of the people at its back is nonsense, for in no capitalist State would the democracy be left free to convince itself that it had the majority of the people at its back. Young working men and working women, exploited as they are to the uttermost by the capitalist, are nowhere to be found in the enjoyment of their full (political) rights. Were they possessed of them the bourgeoisie would straightway send Parliament to the devil rather than allow the workers to carry into effect the will of the majority of the people." (Page 20, Socialist Labour Press.)

The latter part of this passage shows that Radek, at any rate, is opposed (or should be if he is logical) to parliamentary action, as, on the surface, it does not appear to be much use accompanying parliament to the devil! Of course Radek gives no evidence for his statement—but that would be too much to expect from one who contends that Socialism has left the domain of Science and entered that of Practice.

The Bolsheviks, as a matter of fact, had a majority in favour of the "Peace, Bread, and Land" part of their programme, but by no means a majority of CLASS-CONSCIOUS workers—hence the compromises and concessions to mass ignorance and their attempts to justify compromising policy. This also explains the contradictory statements they were driven to make on various occasions. For instance, we have Lenin saying—

What can be achieved at once by a revolutionary act has been achieved at once; for instance, between the 26th October, 1917 and the 8th November, 1917 all private land ownership was abolished. ("The Workers' Dreadnought," 3.7.20.)

If all private land ownership has been abolished then we, who are thousands of miles away, would only be logical if we assumed, on the strength of Lenin's statement, that there was no longer any private ownership of land in Russia. What are we to think, then, when we

read the following, under the heading "A Rough Draft of the Thesis on the Agrarian Question—For the Second Congress of the Communist International"—

However, the direct problem of the victorious proletariat should not be the expropriation of the rich peasantry, for the necessary material, especially technical necessities needed for the socialisation of such farms, fail. Besides that, the social conditions do not allow for this. In exceptional cases, allotments are confiscated which are let out on hire or which are necessary for the petty-peasant population round about these parts. Part of the agricultural machines, which belonged to the rich peasantry, should be lent to these peasants gratis, and so on. According to the general rule—the proletarian State power—the rich peasants should be assured of their land, which should be confiscated only in case of rebellion against the existing labour power. . . . Concerning the question of how the land, confiscated from the rich landowners, is worked, in Russia, which is economically backward, this land was divided amongst the peasantry; only in exclusive cases the so-called Soviet farms were organised.

From the above it will be seen that private property in land has only been abolished on paper. Practically private property still persists. In actual fact, so far as land is concerned, Russia has retreated a step from social production, as land is parcelled out in smaller lots than formerly, the result being a more primitive form of production.

The Bolshevik programme of compromising ("revolutionary compromises") is not merely put forward as being action necessary in Russia, on account of its backwardness, but is laid down as an axiom to be followed out by Socialists in all countries. This is where we come right up against Lenin and the Bolsheviks in general. Here is Lenin's advice to class-conscious British workers ("Left Wing Communism," published by the Communist Party of Great Britain):

. . . since the workers in Britain still support the British Shiedemanns and Kerenskys; since they have not yet experienced a government composed of such men . . . it follows without any doubt that the British Communists must participate in Parliament. They must from within Parliament help the workers to see in practice the results of the Henderson Government; they must help the Hendersons and Snowdens to vanquish Lloyd George and Churchill united (p. 65).

The Communist Party must offer to the Hendersons and the Snowdens a compromise, an electoral understanding:—"Let us go together against the union of Lloyd George and Churchill; let us divide seats in Parliament according to the number of votes cast by the workers for the Labour Party or the Communists (not in the elections but by a special poll), we to retain the fullest freedom of agitation, propaganda, and political activity (p. 66).

Let us submit the above excerpts to a close examination.

In the first paragraph Lenin states that the majority of the workers "still support the British Shiedemanns and Kerenskys." In his succeeding remarks he makes it clear that he designates by this phrase the Henderson and Snowden group. A superficial examination of the situation here would show that the above statement is very wide of the mark, yet Lenin's advice is based on such imaginary material. The result of the last General Election, and also of the more recent Bye-elections, clearly demonstrates that the workers in this country overwhelmingly support the avowed capitalist candidates against the alleged Labour candidates. The fact is that recently the Labour vote has relatively shrunk against the vote cast for Independent Liberals, Coalition Liberals, Tories, and Coalition Tories—none of whom come within the scope of Lenin's phrase "British Shiedemanns and Kerenskys." As a matter of fact Lenin slaughters himself in the same paragraph when he recommends us to help the Snowden group to beat Lloyd George & Co. If the majority of the workers support the Henderson and Snowden groups, then the latter should be the majority in Parliament and should want no help to overthrow Lloyd George and take over the governing power. If they do not desire to take over the governing power our help would be wasted. And finally, by the time we would be strong enough to force them to take over power we should be strong enough to take over power ourselves. However, Lenin is badly informed as to the position. The Labour group is in the minority though they support the Lloyd George Government.

The naivette of the suggestion that the Communists should offer "to the Hendersons and Snowdens a compromise, an electoral understanding," but "we to retain the fullest freedom of agitation, propaganda, and political activity" is too good to pass over. To imagine that the wily Labour leaders are so simple as to walk blindly into the net spread with so much ostentation and "hot-air" needs a child-like, trusting, and simple conception of things such as we cannot lay claim to. This point of view is urged on the ground that the change in view of the workers can "be brought about by the political experience of the masses only." On the same line of argument are we then to support every new party that arises so that the workers shall learn the rottenness of such parties by experiencing their shortcomings as governing parties? Why not give Bottomley's Business Government a chance to shine? No wonder Lenin thought it would take five hundred years to establish Socialism!

GILMAC.

To be Continued.

## "THE FOURTH ESTATE."

The value of the Press to the capitalist class as a bulwark is nowhere more evident, I should think, than in the Sunday newspapers. It is obvious that the average member of the working class finds that the seventh day of the week is the only day on which he can peruse the paper from front to back. On other days he has little leisure in the mornings save for a glance at the headlines and to-day's nap on the sporting page as he sits in the wage slave's car.

But on Sundays it is different. He may lie abed and read to his heart's content—and incidentally to his brain's confusion—all that the talent of Fleet Street and Withy Grove has to offer him. There is very little doubt, too, that this factor is counted for in the production of Sunday papers and is responsible for the matter they contain.

To a certain type of mind (the product of a rotten system, be it understood) the disgusting sordidness of the police court and the divorce court make appeal, and you will consequently find papers which make a feature of reports of the proceedings therein. But those with which we are most concerned are those which inculcate political notions favourable to the capitalist in the minds of the workers.

The impregnation of the unsuspicious brain of the worker is not done openly; it is disguised in clever journalese, catchy colloquialisms that he can understand and repeat to his mates on Monday morning, sensational headlines, and other things that go to make the stuff easily assimilated.

A case in point is that of the "Sunday Chronicle" (29.5.21.)—a Hulton publication—a paper that affects a hearty, democratic, John's-as-good-as-his-master air and serves out cheap clap-trap in large doses. The first article is one by that bitter enemy of the working class, Robert Blatchford. He is nothing if not topical, and he loves to shed a tear over the miseries of some sufferer or other. This time it is toil-worn horses.

Apparently, apart from the old gee-gees, there is nothing we need worry about this week. "God's in his heaven," the Kaiser's at Doorn, and "all's right with the world." And with the implied hope that something will turn up next week R.E. makes our flesh creep for a couple of columns (with matter mostly culled from "Daily News" reports, by the way) and leaves us with the information that his stuff is "copyrighted in America and Canada."

But we may spare a word about Blatchford, although he has been exposed and denounced (Continued on p. 164.)

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Mattheu-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Com'tee. Applications to General Secy.

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**TOOTING.**—Communications to Secy., 24 Worslader-rd., Tooting, S.W.17. Branch meets Fridays at Parochial Hall, Church-ln., Tooting, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secy., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Secy., 11 Carlton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Secy., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mayes-rd., N.22.

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LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 6.0 p.m.  
Finsbury Park, 6.0 p.m.  
Tooting Broadway, junction Garrett-le. 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Parliament Hill, 6.0 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 8.30 a.m. Stratford, Vicarage-l. 7.30

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Tuesdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE

## WHAT SHALL WE DO TO SAVE CAPITALISM?

### A Great Statistician.

The "Labour Leader" of June 26th contains an article by Sir Leo Chiozza Money entitled: "The National Industrial Crisis. How should Labour Face It?" Those who realise the seriousness of working-class conditions at the present moment will see the importance of the question contained in this title. As a statistician Sir Leo is unequalled in this country. On more than one occasion his figures, compiled from official documents, have been used by Socialists with telling effect against capitalism. From the arrangement of his figures in tables that enables one to see at a glance how wealth is divided, or draw comparisons on the fluctuations in trade, etc., it is evident that he understands the significance of his figures so far as they show the failure of the capitalist system to give the bulk of the population a decent standard of living. But neither he nor the other writers of the "Labour Leader" have ever expressed in clear terms the absolute necessity for the workers to abolish the system and establish Socialism as the only remedy for this failure.

### Where He Falls.

In the article referred to Sir Leo shows the enormous fall in the export trade of this country since March of the present year, and insists on the necessity of co-operation between capitalists and workers to recover it. He refers to the sufferings of the workers, but he fails to point out to them that there is always a measure of unemployment, and that, in or out of work, they live in poverty all their lives. Further, he does not tell the workers that the only means which can assure success to the capitalists of this country as against their foreign competitors, are in the long run bound to increase unemployment and poverty, and that the only escape for the workers from these twin evils is not by

increased or more efficient production, but by the establishment of a system where all the means of wealth production will be owned in common, controlled democratically, and consequently only used to satisfy the requirements of the people according to their own arranged plans. We shall see by an examination of his article that Sir Leo's answer to the question "How should Labour face it" entirely ignores the Socialist attitude, and consists in the main of the very methods that spell increased unemployment, assists the capitalists of this country in their competition against foreign capitalists, and increases the extent of capitalist exploitation of the workers generally.

### No Taste in Nothing.

At the very outset Money gives us the key to all his subsequent errors. He says: "We have 47 millions of people and not enough work to feed a fourth of them." It must be obvious to anyone that people are not fed with work, however much the workers may be "fed up" with it.

Sir Leo takes for granted the capitalist assumption that people can only be fed, clothed, and housed on the capitalist basis of production, i.e., ownership by the capitalist class of the means of wealth production and all non-owners unable to obtain the necessities of life unless they can sell their energy, in one form or another, to the possessing class. Now this assumes the chief point at issue between the capitalist and the Socialist, and Sir Leo's arguments are henceforth built up on the assumption that human wants can only be satisfied by the wages or capitalist system.

### No Matter for Surprise.

At first sight it seems strange that a journal which is the organ of a party calling itself Socialist, the I.L.P., should accept articles for

publication so obviously anti-Socialist. When we come to read the columns of the "Labour Leader," however, we find a general agreement with Sir Leo's attitude. Here and there, it is true, a writer declares that only Socialism can remove unemployment and poverty. But such writers are always careful to point out that Socialism as they understand it is State ownership with no modification of the wages system, as in the postal service.

#### A Logical Sequence.

From the acceptance of the capitalist method of production as the only possible method, to its active support is quite a logical step, and Sir Leo is justified in taking it. Having assumed that trade feeds the workers, it necessarily follows that the workers should interest themselves in the extension of trade. Sir Leo declares, therefore, that—

"If anyone says 'what do I care for overseas trade or what you call national trade?' let him be reminded that it is his business to care. We are all responsible beings, and the lives and happiness of 47 millions of people is no light matter. They form a closely woven working community, and there is no possibility of suddenly emigrating them. Here in this year of grace, it is theirs to work or be idle, to be happy or to suffer. We need must care about the overseas trade by virtue of which alone can they get food for their bodies and material for their factories, workshops, and houses."

This writer in a so-called Socialist journal can only see for the workers the choice between starvation and prosecuting capitalist trade as though their lives depended upon it and they were directly interested in it. Because there is no possibility of suddenly emigrating them. Why the "suddenly"? Eight lines further down he says: "We have to recover trade in time of general and world-wide bad trade." There can be no question of emigration as a solution, therefore, at any time, either suddenly or as a gradual process.

#### Labour Leaders Disprove Sir Leo.

We can pass over the suggestion that the difference between happiness and suffering is the difference between being idle and working for a capitalist. The latter is not rendered unhappy by his idleness. The impossibility of happiness for those compelled to work for capitalists is sufficiently evidenced by Labour leaders themselves, who will stoop to almost any treachery if they can only escape from such an existence.

Sir Leo's statement that "only by virtue of the overseas trade can they get food for their bodies," and so on, is a definite and direct re-

nunciation of Socialism on his part. It is only the capitalist who gets anything out of trade. Trade is the capitalist method of robbing those who produce the world's wealth. Socialism is the logical method of production by which those who produce the world's wealth would use and enjoy it. It is therefore the business of a Socialist organisation to explain and teach Socialism as the only alternative to capitalism. Until the workers understand Socialism they cannot take the shortest step towards its establishment.

It is only fair to say that Sir Leo does not side altogether with the capitalists in their wholesale reduction of wages. He thinks that "the wage earner has the right to ask that profits and salaries shall also make sacrifice." Of course, wage-earners, and even salary-earners, can ask the profit-takers, or capitalists, for all sorts of things, and "capital" will certainly concede them the right to ask—that costs nothing.

#### Wasted Breath.

The same applies to Sir Leo's most important suggestion as to how Labour should face the crisis, i.e., "And Labour has the right to demand industrial efficiency. Too many of our industrial plants are out of date and wasteful. Productivity depends increasingly upon scientific methods."

But the workers have no need to demand this. Competition compels the capitalist to adopt the cheapest methods of production. If he fails to do so, well, that's his funeral. For the workers to demand it is to demand what must inevitably result in more unemployment and lower wages. This is a most foolhardy manner in which to face the crisis, seeing that, in Sir Leo's own words, "We have 47 millions of people and not enough work to feed a fourth of them."

Such advice is sufficiently harmful, but the greatest harm is done by arousing in the workers that competitive spirit and hatred against their fellow wage-slaves abroad. A Socialist organisation should endeavour to show that the real antagonism in modern society is between the working class and the capitalist class, and that the workers must come together in an international organisation to overthrow capitalism and establish Socialism.

#### A Pertinent Question.

How is it possible to convince the workers of this while at the same time urging them to fight each other by competitive methods that can only have the effect of worsening conditions for themselves all round? Either the workers of all lands must join hands for the establishment of Socialism, or they must submit to the compe-

titive madness advocated by Sir Leo. There is no middle course.

The Socialist does not offer advice or assistance to the capitalist class. They rule in their own interest; if difficulties arise for them it is for them to surmount them—in doing so they strengthen their hold over the workers. If the capitalists cannot surmount the difficulties and obstacles that confront them, they are all the weaker to resist the attacks of the Socialists. In either case they run the show and are responsible, consequently the workers must sit in judgment on them. When they do they must reach the following verdict:

"Production for profit fails to satisfy the needs of the working class, who produce all wealth. The class that live by profits stop production when buyers are scarce and drive the workers out on to the streets to starve. With increasing facilities for producing wealth the working class become poorer as time goes on, while the capitalist class become ever more wealthy. The workers suffer most when wealth in all forms is most plentiful. They can only live by selling their labour power, their energy—becoming slaves—to the class that own the means of life."

#### When the Workers Understand.

When the workers are agreed on that verdict, being in the majority, they will take the shortest cut to power—organise politically for control of the machinery of government. Once having control they will no longer have to ask, without being heard; to demand, only to be contemptuously ignored. The power over nature that has been won by generations of struggle will be used to satisfy the needs of mankind in a direct manner. With no parasitic class to intervene, the workers will use land and machinery by arrangement among themselves, for themselves alone. That is the only way for the workers to face this or any industrial crisis. Those who tell them differently are playing the capitalist game, spreading confusion and breeding hatred and division in the ranks of the workers. F. F.

#### ATTENTION!

Will those interested in the formation of a branch of the Party in Earlsfield and Wandsworth please communicate with L. W. Palmer, 390 Merton Rd., Southfields, S.W.18.

Readers who find it difficult or impossible to obtain the SOCIALIST STANDARD through the usual channels should communicate with the Head Office, 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1., when regular delivery will be arranged.

#### UGHTS AND CROSSES.

We often hear Parliamentary election derided as a "game of oughts and crosses," and indeed Parliamentary action does not find much favour among the so-called working-class movement at the present time. Very few of those who espouse the cause of Direct Action know that there are fashions in theories of tactics, and that they are but victims of the latest craze.

The history of the modern working-class movement is the history of the alternation of opinion and feeling—especially the latter—between Direct Action and Parliamentary Action. After the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824 trade unions sprang up like mushrooms. The high hopes raised among the working class by the Reform Bill agitation were dashed to the ground on that Bill becoming law. The disappointment and discontent arising from the failure of the benefits promised by the Reform Party to materialise found expression in trade union organisation and a series of strikes. The legislature was too slow for the people. The adults in factories must by unions among themselves make a Short Time Bill for themselves." (Craik: "Short History of the Modern Working Class Movement," p. 29.) A number of unsuccessful strikes and successful lock-outs caused the collapse of the "Grand National Union," and so brought to a close a period of Direct Action.

Direct Action having failed, the way was prepared for the political movement known as Chartism, which came to an end with the great array of military force massed against it on 10th April 1848. Then followed the period in which the principle trade unions were formed. The A.S.E. in 1851; the Carpenters' and Joiners' union in 1860; the Miners in 1863, etc.

The Taff Vale judgment, which decided that a trade union could be sued in its collective capacity for the act of a member or official, gave a fillip to the movement for labour representation in the House of Commons, and extravagant hopes were raised by the relative success of the Labour Party in 1906.

The present wave of Direct Actionism is the result of disappointment with the Labour Party. The writer is of opinion that the decline of the prevailing "fashion" will date from the Black Friday fiasco.

One of the illusions on which the master class depend for their retention of power is that the Government is an independent, neutral body mediating impartially between the different sections of society. Had the strike taken place conflicts on a larger scale than any hitherto were certain to have happened. When the Government is compelled to use the armed

forces it reveals its true nature as the executive committee of the capitalist class. The more it shows its teeth, the more extensive the scale upon which the armed forces are used, the clearer becomes this fact. Therefore the capitalist class, as represented in the House of Commons, were prepared to sacrifice the immediate interests of the coalowners in order to safeguard the interests of their class as a whole. Another lesson to be drawn is that to the extent that the working class shows a united front the capitalist class tends to disunity. Although a Triple Alliance strike could have been suppressed quite easily, as soon as one was threatened the capitalist class was divided into those who were in favour of the vigorous use of the armed forces and those who feared its ultimate consequences. If this was the effect of a mere strike over wages on the capitalist class, what would be the effect on them of the return to Parliament of an increasing number of real working-class delegates, returned by Socialist votes?

According to a Communist speaker who I heard, the capitalist class have a very simple expedient to prevent the return of a Socialist majority. In the event of the growth in Parliament of such a strong Socialist minority as to make the return at a general election of a Socialist majority probable, the capitalist government would carry a resolution extending the life of Parliament, as was done during the war. This certainly appears very simple. The assumption is that things would run just as smoothly after the act as before. But would they?

No. The international system of capitalist production is dependent for its smooth working upon credit and confidence, and those upon social stability. The indicator of the stability of social relations is Parliament. As soon as Parliament removes itself from contact with the electorate confidence and credit go, and all the symptoms of an acute trade crisis manifest themselves. Cash payment is demanded, stocks and shares fall, and large numbers of the smaller capitalists are precipitated into the ranks of the proletariat. The capitalist class itself is rent asunder and the loudest demand for a general election comes from its own ranks.

In a recent issue of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, an article appeared on "Communist Consistency," wherein was given glaring examples of inconsistency on the part of the Communists. Not the least of their inconsistencies is that on the one hand they depreciate the power of the capitalist class to the extent of claiming that they can be expropriated by a minority taking advantage of a big strike and a wave of discontent, and on the other hand elevate it into a

powerful organisation capable of resisting the expressed will of the majority of the people.

The capitalist class are neither all-powerful nor such fools as to be caught napping by minorities. Our weakness is their strength. While but a small proportion of the working-class understand their slave position in society, and are organised for the purpose of ending it, the capitalist class are strong. But when the working class wake up to the fact that their masters live in riotous luxury on the proceeds of their, the workers', exploitation, and manifest a determination to end the system, the vaunted power of the capitalist class will melt and vanish like margarine in the July sun. G. D.

### GILDED CAPITALISM.

"GUILD SOCIALISM RE-STATEd." G. D. H. Cole. 6s. Nett.

Among those whose wont it is "to fiddle and muddle and fuddle" in vain efforts to "evolve" wage-slavery into something more palatable to the working class, Mr. Cole is indeed the king. After colossal endeavours to construct a scheme in which society would "afford the greatest possible opportunity for individual and collective self-expression for all its members," our author produces, complete with all its trappings of class division and contradictions, its hideous countenance of war which is hell and "peace" which is worse—capitalism.

Somehow or other our author noticed the "aspirations" of the workers. These "aspirations" he and his select circle of guildsmen have discussed until there is placed before us the plan whereby the social organism, impelled by the logic of his arguments, will flow into the mould that Mr. Cole has been able to "devise and create."

The latter objects to the class character of capitalism. He eliminates it. This or that economic prop offends his eye. Out it comes. It is painted—and replaced. The result is—Guild Socialism.

Without any consideration whatever of productive forces, economic structure or development, Mr. Cole calmly constructs his social edifice. This he whittles away until it will fit nicely and squarely on the economic structure of capitalism, in a manner favourable to "small scale producers." Then he impudently takes the existing trade union movement, and alters its shape and policy until it will furnish him with the means of "transition."

The author bases his case on what he himself terms an assumption: that society is to be regarded as a complex of associations held to-

gether by the wills of their members, whose well-being is its purpose. Doubtless this assumption gained weight with the author after thoroughly surveying capitalism to-day. For us it is enough to know that society's members are held together and their relations decided by the manner of gaining a livelihood.

On this "assumption" he builds his system. With him there is no question of "Historical foundation, economic structure, Socialist result." Mr. Cole starts from the top. His system when completely established, will be built "on the basis of large scale production and the world market." "Industrial organisation" will "develop the tradition of free communal service," then will come, "from producer and consumer alike, a wide-spread demand for goods of finer quality," which will bring about "a return over a considerable sphere, to small-scale production."

Our M.A. is certainly amusing.

The system of society we live in is a veritable hotch-potch of antagonisms and contradictions. It is class-divided. Those who make life possible exist, half fed, half clothed, half sheltered. The drones live luxuriously, debauched and useless. The poverty of the workers, the wealth of their masters, the class cleavage, the contradictions of capitalism, all have grown with the development of the productive forces. The capitalist class cannot control these forces, which tirelessly strive to break through their capitalist "shell." But working-class agency is needed. Mr. Cole sees the danger.

Back to "small scale production"!

The words "evolutionary" and "revolutionary" we told are capable of bearing a variety of interpretations. Revolution implies force, though not, in our author's opinion, necessarily on a large scale. By "evolutionary" some mean "political," but "there is also a wider sense in which 'evolutionary' tactics can denote a method applicable not merely to politics, but to every sphere of social action, economic and civic as well as political." The policy, then, should be the maximum use of the "evolutionary weapons" plus the minimum of "revolutionary action." The more evolution the less revolution.

Doubtless the reader will be pleased to hear of these new "interpretations." We, however, are quite content with the meanings implied when the words are used in other branches of science. The word evolution expresses the fact that "Nature, and all things in nature" (contrary to old beliefs) change. Evolution does not imply any particular manner or method of change. What is more, scientists who fully admit the process of change are to this day, in various branches of science, seeking the How and the Why.

Further, evolution does not imply that an organism must necessarily change every moment of its existence. "If there is no perceptible change in environment an organism may remain practically the same for ages" (Dennis Hird). It should also be remembered that it is folly to apply the laws governing evolution in one phase of nature to any and everything.

By revolution is meant a complete change. "The man who says that the secret of progress is 'evolution, not revolution,' may be talking very good social philosophy—I have nothing to do with that—but he is not talking science as he thinks. In every modern geological work you read of periodical 'revolutions' in the story of the earth" (Joseph McCabe). "The records of those old revolutions of the earth's surface are contained in the stones beneath our feet" (Prof. Geikie).

Human society has evolved. Its evolution is distinctly marked by each of those totally different systems that we know as Primitive Communism, Chattel Slavery, Feudalism, and Capitalism.

Each system of society functions from a certain basis—the productive forces at a particular stage of their development. Each system flourishes while there is scope for these forces to evolve. When, however, the productive forces are fettered, the conflict between the classes that are the human expression of economic development, reaches its culminating point. The class next in the order of social evolution overthrows the existing system. The new one is born. But as Boudin (who has been speaking of philosophy and science) says: "There is a continuity of human society itself notwithstanding the changes in the form of its organisation . . . just as there is continuity in the economic structure of human society notwithstanding the different 'economies' which were prevalent at different stages of its development."

So to Mr. Cole's twaddle of "evolutionary weapons" plus "revolutionary action," "working-class economic power," "productive control of industry," and so on, we will say that working class activity on the eve of revolution will be determined, as now, by the conditions of capitalism.

The book is all confusion and camouflage. The charms of its author's Utopia inspire contempt. Financial problems, provision of capital, regulation of incomes and prices, coercive functions, railway season ticket holders' associations, telephone users' associations, leaders, discipline, and authority—each and all to satisfy the "aspirations" of the workers!

"Have I not assumed the case against equality of income?" Yes—and yet emphatically no (p. 72). Does Guild Socialism claim to be

international? "It is hard to answer 'yes' or 'no' to that question" (p. 208).

Our author may increase his output; he may persistently continue to white-wash the class war. He may blare "Return to small-scale production," or Primitive Communism, or any other old thing. The workers *will* organise politically; the workers *will* abolish capitalism; the productive forces *will* be unfettered. The private ownership of the means of life, with its corollary, production for profit, *will* give way to common ownership and production for use.

A. H.

## THE WORK OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

To the average working man the Socialist appears as a type of individual who suffers from a fever of discontent—full of complaints, always grumbling. We will show, however, that this view is but one of the many illusions which cloud certain working-class minds. The Socialist possesses ambitions of a particular kind, which do not allow time for morbid reflections. He recognises that "the battle's to the strong," and while, therefore, healthily dissatisfied with modern conditions of existence, nevertheless enjoys contentment of mind in the knowledge that he is working for the only thing worth while, i.e., the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of Socialism.

The distinction the present scribe wishes to draw is that the Socialist is dissatisfied because he *knows* the cause of all the evils which afflict the working class, and that knowledge represents his dissatisfaction. On the other hand, the "discontents" are the grumblers and grouse—the unhealthy-minded—because they do not know. Lacking Socialist knowledge, they find themselves always in difficulties, always uncertain, and consequently not equipped to adapt themselves to, or battle with, the problems of every day existence.

Not that I would suggest, however, that the Socialist is able to entirely avoid the effects of the economic system; but generally speaking, he has a better chance because he is conscious of the cause.

Now there are many millions of discontents in the ranks of the working class. We meet them everywhere. Some of them call themselves Humanitarians, some Bolsheviks, some Secularists, some Prohibitionists, some Home Rulers, and so on.

The Socialist, claiming that Socialism is the only hope of the workers, and that all else is illusion, is a wholesome distinction. And now

to examine and explain the nature of the work of the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain sets out in its Declaration of Principles that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. Special stress is laid on this—the subject matter of this article—because one of the greatest obstacles with which the workers are confronted is the idea, fostered by unscrupulous individuals and parties claiming to champion the cause of the working class, that leaders are necessary. So deep-rooted is this demoralising notion that we are called upon at our public meetings, when stating our claim to be the only Socialist party, to name some of our leaders. Our innocent reply that we have no leaders is met with the incredulous retort: "But you must have leaders!" The word "leaders" implies not only those who lead but those who are led. Now only those require, or suffer themselves to be, led who cannot see the way for themselves, and naturally, those who cannot see the way for themselves will not be able to see whether they are being led in the right direction or the wrong. Labour leaders, therefore, are able to render to the capitalists the very valuable service of misleading the workers. This is why the ruling class bestow praises and titles upon labour leaders, and entreat the workers to follow their wise (!) leadership. The first work of the Socialist Party, therefore, is to spread abroad among the workers that political knowledge which alone can put them beyond the lure and treachery of leaders by showing them clearly the object they have to attain and the road they have to travel to attain it.

Now for a closer examination of the nature of that work. Firstly, applicants applying for membership in the Socialist Party of Great Britain have to affirm their acceptance and understanding of the Object and Principles of the party as contained on the application form. If the Party are not satisfied that the applicant sufficiently understands our position, it is suggested that the application be deferred and that the would-be member should attend our meetings (ALL meetings of the S.P.G.B. are open to the public), read our literature, and get assistance with his or her difficulties from any member of our organisation. When the applicant has shown that his knowledge of the Socialist position is such as to fit him for membership of the S.P.G.B. his application is accepted.

It is now that the real Socialist work of the member begins. The unit of organisation is the branch, and it is inside the branch that an outlet is found for working-class abilities in the true sense of the word. There are the Rules

to be read and understood. This done, the new member gets a more complete understanding of the nature of the activities of the branch and of the organisation as a whole—and this understanding can obviously only come about as the result of regular attendance at branch and party meetings.

Now a desire generally begins to manifest itself on the part of the new member to participate more directly in the work of the branch and of the party as a whole. It then becomes a question for the member to decide in what particular direction his abilities would be most useful. By close association with the branch and the party the member soon decides upon a choice of work. The principal branches of the party work (executed entirely by the voluntary labour of the members) consists of the following: Clerical work at Head Office; organisation of sale and distribution of party literature; work of the various sub-committees e.g., the Editorial Committee, whose duty it is to arrange for articles for the Party Organ, publication of leaflets, pamphlets, manifestoes, etc. Then there is the collection of cuttings from newspapers and periodicals of all kinds and from all sources, home and foreign, and their arrangement in suitable order for future reference (this record provides the organisation with facts which enables our speakers and writers to push home their attack upon the capitalist system and to criticise and expose its apologists and defenders); organisation of out-door propaganda by area propaganda committees; study classes at the Head Office and in the Branches, where members congregate in order to equip themselves with the knowledge necessary to Socialist propagandists. Finally, there is the Executive Committee, elected at the Annual Conference, and whose duty it is to generally supervise and organise the work of the Party in every sphere.

In these principal spheres of activity various qualifications are needed, and to organise the abilities and resources of our class is the work which confronts the Socialist Party. I would here dwell upon the qualifications of the Socialist propagandist, one of the highest qualifications to which a Socialist can aspire. This entails unremitting labours, in order to acquire a sound knowledge of Marxian economics, history, sociology, trade unionism, and so on, to effectively defend the party's position at all times and in all places from the attacks of our opponents; also in order to give a clear presentation of our case and a correct and vigorous criticism of current affairs in the world of politics and labour.

These are the main streams of activity of the Socialist Party and its band of Socialist workers.

There are, of course, the various duties of the officials of the branches, who organise and carry on the work of the branches and their local activities.

The writer set out to explain the nature of the work of the Socialist Party. He has attempted briefly to do so. To-day, more than ever, the unorganised should ask themselves whether they are prepared and fitted to engage in the great historical mission of the working class—the emancipation of all mankind from the vile conditions of existence imposed upon them by the system of private ownership in means of living.

To those, therefore, who understand our Object and Principles we extend an earnest invitation to come forward and assist in the efforts we are making to build up a vigorous and healthy Socialist organisation, bound together by a common understanding, with the tie of class-conscious solidarity, determined to wage uncompromising war on all who bar our way toward the goal of our ambition—the establishment of the Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth, where poverty will give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

"Rise like lions from your slumbers,  
In unvanquishable numbers.  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep hath fall'n on you:  
Ye are many, they are few."

O. C. I.

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in the Great Eastern Railway? Here you have a frank admission of failure, for even after Nationalisation there will be it seems, "actual hardship" and "poverty-stricken country vicarages." This by the way. The method of obtaining the money for this grant is novel indeed. Assume you nationalise the railways first, and the cost of buying out the shareholders is 500 millions, you make a levy on capital sufficient to yield this amount. By this means the rich railowners provide part of the money necessary for their own expropriation, and as the Government, whilst paying out 500 millions only, receives 500 millions rail stock and 500 millions from the levy, the National Debt is reduced by 500 millions. Repeat this with every industry in turn, and then "Hail the Revolution!" It reminds one of the problem of the two snakes who started eating each other from the tail!

Having seen that wages, at present, are the workers' chief concern, and not wishing that his Utopia should offend by their non-existence, Mr. Gould makes it clear that payment for labour power will not cease. That is what he means when he talks of a redistribution of wealth. Having persuaded the capitalists to buy one another out, the statesmen of the trade unions, under the tutorship of Guild Socialists, would run industry for the nation, "treat the workers like men and brothers," and pay a family, on the basis of present production, about £400 per annum.

The examples Mr. Gould gives to show the increase in production that will result from the kindly treatment of the workers is instructive:

A Mr. S. J. L. Vincent, A.M.I.C.E., borough surveyor at Newbury, builds houses. He guarantees a 48 hour week, and treats his workmen like brothers, so that they, "feeling that they are not working to build up profits but to build houses," respond in the same spirit. Of course, Mr. S. J. L. Vincent, A.M.I.C.E.'s object is to sow the seeds of love among his workmen, and so it must be quite an unforeseen accident that he can build houses at £650 each while contractors, at a period of dearer materials, asked £875. As the cost of bricks, etc., to Mr. Vincent was more than to the contractors, and as his income was probably not much less, the difference in price must be in his wages expenditure. Yet Mr. Gould quotes this and says to the workers "see what benefits will result from nationalisation, under which you will be treated like brothers." All I can see is increased unemployment, and nowhere in this book are we told what provision is to be made for those who, owing to increased production, have nothing to do. Also we are not told who is going to condescend to treat their workers like brothers.

Will their exploiters do so then any more than now, or is this an invitation to the "middle class" to reap the reward of their imagined intellectual superiority on the backs of the workers?

But our chief quarrel with Mr. Gould is over his citation of Marx as an authority for his conclusions. He does not understand Marxian economics and philosophy, and should confine himself to Sidney Webb and Fabianism. Marxism and Fabianism are quite incompatible, and it is therefore ignorance of one or both which makes him support his tottering ideas with selections from the two of them.

See how he misinterprets Marx. He summarises Marx's description of the transformation from capitalism to Socialism as the taking over by the workers "in one solid lump, of the capital which private capitalism itself has in accordance with the laws of its own development, coagulated into that lump." Marx taught that capital, i.e., wealth used to exploit labour, will cease to exist with the passing of capitalism, since the workers cannot exploit themselves. To talk about "taking over capital," therefore, is nonsense; anyway, it isn't Marx.

In passing, one should notice the phrase "private capitalism" here. Its insertion shows that when our author speaks of Nationalisation he has State capitalism in mind.

Did he understand the primary theory in Marx, that of value, which states that the value of a commodity is measured by the amount of labour socially necessary for its reproduction, he would not be puzzled by the fact that fertile ground on which little labour is spent produces greater value than less productive ground on which a greater amount of labour is expended. Also he would never be so foolish as to write: "The workers insist on higher wages so that they may cope with the higher prices. The capitalist often has no objection. He simply raises his prices again, so as to get back the extra amount he has to pay in the cost of labour."

The capitalist, like the worker, is bound by the laws of the system and cannot raise prices at will. But then, Mr. Gould does not realise that the system controls man, he thinks man controls the system, and has but to will a new world in order to produce it, ignoring social development.

Yet we can agree with the last sentence in the book, "there is no third way" (i.e., to attain Socialism). There is not even a second. The only way is for the workers to study and understand their position, and the laws governing the society of which they are a part, for then they can and will become possessed of the machinery of government, and under the protec-

tion of the power then at their disposal, work with the economic forces to mould the new classless society, the Socialist Republic.

W. J. R.

## IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

### Ireland.

In addition to the usual charges and counter-charges of murder, robbery, and arson, attention has been drawn to the attempted Sinn Fein commercial boycott of Ulster, with particular reference to the advocacy of this blockade by "Freeman's Journal." The Government is considering the advisability of taking action against "Freeman's" on account of this intention to "impede the natural flow of trade." This latter phrase is somewhat amusing when one remembers how this same Government has burned creameries and private business houses, stopped markets and fairs, curtailed railway services, and forbidden the sailing of coast food ships, all with the deliberate purpose of compelling the submission of the Irish by intensifying the existing distress.

### Your Stake in the Empire.

Of the total loan indebtedness of the Government amounting to £27,573,000,000 only £596,000,000, or less than 8 per cent., is held by small investors.

### SMALL NATIONS.

#### The Siberian Republic.

The Government couldn't take notice of the Japanese attack on this republic because it is not in diplomatic relationship with this country. The real reason, the one which always underlies the political sob-stuff served out to the workers when they are wanted to fight, was disclosed later (Hansard, July 6th): "... as direct British interests in those regions are not great they do not propose to give recognition to the Republic at the present time." Is the price of the renewal of the Anglo Jap treaty the granting of a free hand to the Japs to protect (that is to exploit) Siberia?

Viscount Curzon, whose chief title to fame appears to be the frequency with which he gets fined for making himself a danger and a nuisance to pedestrians by road-hogging, asks if something cannot be done to prevent bus drivers from inconveniencing their passengers by starting off too soon!

### AGRICULTURE.

#### Corn Production Acts (Repeal) Bill.

This Bill has provided some unusually vivid examples of the bad faith of a capitalist Government, and the unashamed lying and incompetence of its ministers.

The original 1917 Act was to last to 1922, and by the 1920 Agriculture Act the guaranteed prices for the farmers and minimum rates of pay for the labourers were to be continued with four years notice of discontinuance. Six months afterwards the Government suddenly announced its intention of abolishing the latter entirely and of giving the farmers some £19,000,000 for this year's harvest. During that six months the Minister of Agriculture, Sir A. G. Boscawen, who now says that the Agricultural Wages Board is an unmixed evil, fought an election in a rural constituency on the cry that he was the "author of the Agriculture Act which guaranteed a living wage to the Agricultural labourer!"

The Government in 1917 indignantly protested through Mr. Protheroe that the minimum wage was not dependent on the guarantees, but in 1921 abolishes the former because it is inseparable from the latter.

Boscawen objected to the Board because it and the National Union of Agricultural Workers had taken advantage of their legal position to compel defaulting employers to the number of 20,000 to pay up something like £100,000 arrears of wages, and then suggested that the method of conciliation and brotherliness was the better way. One remembers the argument of the early war period about arguing with mad dogs!

The experience of collecting these arrears brought to light a most amazing unanimity of thought and action among these farmers. Almost without exception they never knew there was a Wages Board (until it was about to be abolished); they had always paid more than the specified rate; and lastly, if they had paid less then they had only employed their workers (who were all, it seems, physical and mental degenerates) out of charity.

This Minister of Agriculture also showed by his answers to questions that he didn't even understand the construction and functions of this very Wages Board, the abolition of which had become so urgent.

The Labour Party adopted a whining attitude as usual: (Mr. Wignall) "We as a Labour Party gave loyal support to the Government," and now see how we are treated! The most apt description was Mr. Spencer's "This Bill gives £19,000,000 to the farmer and goodwill to the labourers." Mr. Pretymann gave an instructive

opinion on election addresses, their purpose and reliability. In answer to the interjection "What about your letter to your constituents?" That admits the case" he replied "I have nothing to do with any right hon. gentleman's letters to his constituents. *They prove nothing.*"

At the moment of writing it seems probable that as the result of a very effective publicity campaign in the rural constituencies, conducted by the Agricultural Workers' Union, and the consequent fear on the part of sitting members that their seats may not be safe at the next election, the Government may grant a concession in the form of power to make legally binding on the industry agreements arrived at between workers' and employers' representatives on Conciliation Boards.

Sir James Campbell for four and a half years' service as Lord Chief Justice of Ireland and Lord Chancellor receives a pension of £3,692 6s. 1d.

Forty-two members of the Irish Police Force have been convicted of robbery since January, 1919.

Colonel Wedgwood, member of the Free Trade Labour Party, wants the Government to prevent the Anglo-American Oil Co. (an American concern) from issuing capital in this country.

#### How the Labour Party

##### Fights the Government.

W. Graham (Railways Bill, 6th July): "We have been very fair and reasonable with the Government in Committee. We have been very much interested in many parts of the Bill, but we have studiously refrained from moving amendments other than those which appeared to us to be vital. I suggest to the Government that we are entitled to rather better consideration than they have shown."

#### How the Labour Party Fights Itself.

(War Pensions Bill, July 8.)

Mr. Lawson (Labour Party): "The Right Hon. Gentleman has quoted the Labour Party's memorandum. . . I have not seen that memorandum; I do not hold with it."

#### Egypt.

Earl Winterton, greatly upset over the alleged ill-treatment of foreigners by native Egyptians in recent disturbances arising out of the Government's suppression of nationalist de-

monstrations, asked what steps would be taken to deal with these "crimes," these "fanatical anti-Christian, anti-European outbreaks." Is it really a matter for amazement that Egyptians should be prejudiced against Christians who were primarily advanced commercial agents and Empire builders, and Christians only incidentally; against foreigners who came to liberate and enlighten, and who, despite a wearisome repetition of promises to depart, have remained to annexe; who have given the Egyptian peasant in return for security and independence the illusory advantage of engineering marvels from which again incidentally the benefactors reap handsome profit? Moreover, may these "backward" nations not ask that idle ornaments of the superior white races should before waxing indignant, see that their own houses are in order? Were the loot-inspired anti-German riots of the war years on such a high moral plane that the Earl can afford to invite comparison, and did he raise his voice in protest then?

#### How to Wangle Balance Sheets.

The Prudential Assurance Co., out of a total of £520,000 paid as dividends, puts down £120,000 income tax payments for its shareholders as "management expenses."

E. H.

### 'REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIANITY'

The "Crusader" is a journal published by a number of people having in common a belief in the power of the ethics of Christ to overcome all the difficulties and to combat all the evils which trouble mankind. In the main they appear to have arrived at their present standpoint as a result of the recent war. During it they took up a pacifist attitude, and none could deny the courage and sincerity with which this was maintained. Further, they have shown a genuine desire to face new problems with the same independence, and to apply to them their universal remedy. As a case in point their condemnation of war for its disregard for human life, which in their opinion is sacred, has compelled a broadening of outlook to include industrial strife; for they soon realised that peace-time pursuits are just as disregarding of the lives and individuality of the workers as is war.

Arising out of this an endeavour was made to get shareholders in railways, mines, and industry generally, voluntarily to give up part or the whole of their incomes in order to ensure

the payment of an adequate wage to the workers. Of their sympathy for the latter there can be no question, but this invitation to shareholders is typical of their general utterly futile well-meaningness. Practical help may be an advance on passive sympathy, but neither is of permanent use unless accompanied by knowledge, and the one obvious fact about our "New Crusaders" is that they simply do not understand the problem for which they think they have found the solution.

That there is a conflict in society few people now trouble to deny, although some of our opponents would explain it as the outcome of the workers' ignorance and consequent failure to recognise that Capital and Labour are Siamese twins. The "Crusader" group does also realise that this conflict is sufficiently real to make Christian ethics impossible of application under present conditions, and describe themselves therefore as revolutionary; but although they look hopefully on signs of movement among the workers, they do not correctly interpret what they see. Viewing society through ethical spectacles, they fail entirely to understand its structure, the lines of its development, and the nature and magnitude of the forces at work within it.

Dimly perceiving that the future is with the workers, they nevertheless will not recognise that the class division in society is fundamental, and look to sympathetic interest of all people of goodwill to rid the human race of the material and moral evils of the present system. Necessarily somewhat detached from the workers, they sympathise with but do not trust them; they cannot rid themselves of the idea that Labour needs benevolent shepherding into the green pastures of the new world. They preach fearlessness and confidence in the innate goodness and loyalty of mankind, but nevertheless allow W. J. Chamberlain to insult his trade unionist readers with the remark that, although himself aware before the event of the impending Triple Alliance collapse, and knowing "that the position of the workers' army looks pretty nigh hopeless, . . . I hadn't the courage to say so," and again, "had I written all that was in my mind last week . . . I should probably have been denounced as a reactionary." After which he has the amusing impudence to condemn R. Williams and J. R. Thomas for not leading their "hopeless army" to the slaughter. Mr. Chamberlain, who thinks the workers unable to endure the truth, really ought to think twice before calling Bob Williams a "hot air merchant."

Confident in the power of love and believing that right is might, they nevertheless place considerable trust in trade union organisation

and have a healthy regard for mere numbers.

Whenever the employers or the Government, sure of their dominating position, take the offensive against the workers, the "Crusader" always sees in the protest into which the latter are provoked, the early coming of the Social Revolution. They invariably accept the indignation of the rank and file and the wild utterances of their leaders as tokens of strength instead of what they often are, merely the signs of a realisation of helplessness. When each strike or lock-out ends in compromise or failure for the workers, and the Revolution fails to materialise, they are again unable to recognise it for what it really is, the overcoming of a less force by a greater. It is ascribed to the treachery, cowardice, or incompetence of this or that leader, the apathy and lack of spirituality of the workers, the wickedness of Lloyd George, to anything, in fact, but the harsh reality. The duplicity of Mr. Lloyd George on the one hand and the brilliance of Mr. F. Hodges on the other would matter but little to class-conscious workers, and are likely to prove equally dangerous while political knowledge is lacking.

The "Crusader" does not supply that knowledge.

At the commencement of the last coal struggle, when it was obvious to most people that, for the miners, conditions were exceptionally unfavourable for an industrial dispute, the "Crusader," true to its belief, advocated the tactics of humiliation and despair of appealing to the humanity of the employers instead of offering what resistance was possible.

"Pity may be evoked where threats would have provoked only counter-threats. Labour, if it were wise, would realise that 'the broken sword' is the most powerful of all weapons." (4th March, 1921.)

Aware of the immense power of the Press and seeing this power invariably used against the workers, they counsel introspection and contemplation of the soul as the road to independence of the written word, instead of teaching the real lesson that this is just one more weapon controlled by the capitalist class and used by them to further their class interests.

What the "Crusader" lacks is the recognition of the first importance of the fact that one class—the capitalists—lives by robbing another class—the workers. That robbery is cloaked under legal forms, softened by protective measures—the Factory and Compensation Acts, etc.—obscured by the activities of well-meaning reformers, and cleverly and persistently denied by the Churches and other institutions which supply apologetics for the dominant class, but the robbery exists and will become ever more intensive. Where such material is provided

there must be conflict. Its appearance may change, and under special circumstances, such as the war, it may seem to have been obliterated, but it cannot remain hidden.

In that conflict force rules.

This is the kernel of the whole matter, let our "Crusaders" disprove it if they can. During the war they preached negotiation and conciliation. In peace they have so far recognised realities as to condone the use of the strike; the power of the folded arms. They were wrong in their attitude to war, and in so far as they approve of strikes only on the false assumption that they are merely the abstention from labour, and therefore passive and morally justifiable, they are wrong now. A strike does inflict additional hardship and suffering on people not directly interested, and on that ground alone should logically be condemned by the "Crusader."

War between nations is occasioned by the struggle for markets and for the possession of regions rich in mineral wealth, and while the present competitive system remains is inevitable. It cannot be attributed to human weakness, and cannot, therefore, be removed by appeals, however eloquent, to the "better nature" of the peoples of the world.

Our attitude to war, the Socialist attitude, is one of uncompromising opposition, because we contend that the workers have a common interest against the world capitalist class, and have nothing to gain by partaking of the quarrels of the latter, which are only possible with the continuance of exploitation.

The labour leaders who served their masters by opposing any cessation of the war until the "enemy" had been "crushed," and who serve them now by preaching industrial peace, were right in one thing. Quarrels are not settled by negotiation. While the forces at the disposal of the contending parties are more or less equally matched, and while the cause of the quarrel remains, it cannot be disposed of by the round table conference. It is true that eventually enemies have to meet to arrange peace terms, but only when one or the other is prepared to yield, or when the object of each has become unattainable.

The same is applicable to industrial disputes, the class struggle.

The class which now hold the reins of government will not willingly let them go, nor will they, except under compulsion, put in the workers' hands the weapons they may use for their emancipation.

Fortunately, however, the capitalists are compelled by other forces beyond their control to grant such education as enables the workers to learn, and having learned, to act. The deve-

lopment of the system itself provides the force in question.

The need of the hour for us is to put before the workers the knowledge which will enable them to recognise the class nature of society and its government as the true explanation of social chaos.

There is nothing in this beyond the comprehension of the average worker, and an appreciation of it will lead surely to organisation for the capture of political control which must precede any social transformation. However much the "Crusader" may desire this end, in so far as their propaganda makes more difficult the perception of the facts of present social organisation in all their simplicity, it can only be regarded as a hindrance to the early coming of "the day."

H.

### OUR THOUSAND POUND FUND.

	Already acknowledged	£	597	6	8
Wood Green.		2	0	0	
Parker, W. Ham, 6s. 3d.; Scott, C. 2s 6d.					
Sammy, per E.F., 2s.; Alexandra, 1s.		11	9		
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Shearstone, L., £1; Owen, Mr. 6d.		1	0	6	
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Battersea " " F. Craske, 394		4	0		
" " " J. Banks, 395		2	0		
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E. London " donation		5	0	0	
Islington " "		1	0	0	
F.D.F. " "		1	15	0 1/2	
Burke, Mr., 2s.; Owen, Mr., 6d.		2	6		
Page, C., 37 1/2		7	6		
Sale of Billiard Table on a/c		4	10	0	
" Conference Post Cards		1	1	0	
" Book		1	6		
Total		£	658	15	7 1/2

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE "IF" MAN AGAIN.

TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Sirs,—As a regular reader of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. I read with interest the article "Parliamentary or Direct Action," also "Where Russia Stands" in May issue. I fully recognise the importance of parliamentary action in the struggle to establish Socialism, but should like to ask a few questions. Any talk of armed rising in face of the up-to-date bloody methods of warfare employed by capitalist States is mere madness. I agree there.

But what is to be done if the master class refused to allow the use of the ballot box when the workers understood their position? Again, why shouldn't Socialists get into the Labour Party to convert its rank and file to Socialism as in the trade unions?

The Labour Party is a working class party, its rank and file being *anti-capitalists*.

Do you favour Socialists working for the development of Socialism from craft and industrial basis? And concerning your article on Russia, suppose the S.P.G.B. had been the S.P. of Russia, what would have been its position in 1917? I believe the Communists of Russia to have done the only thing possible considering the time, country, and conditions. Our methods will be different, as our conditions will be different.

S. WARR.

### OUR REPLY.

The master class can only refuse to allow the use of the ballot box at the expense of chaos. As pointed out in the article "Parliamentary or Direct Action," capitalism has become far too complicated a system for the capitalists to manage personally. Hence the continued delegation of powers and functions to various and increasing bodies, as County Councils, Borough Councils, Town Councils, Boards of Trade, of Education, of Agriculture, of Asylums, etc., right down to the little Parish meeting.

These bodies carry on the normal and detail functions of society under the laws made in Parliament, and under the general control of that central body of power. The extension of capitalism and the concentration of wealth into fewer hands compels the ever-increasing delegation of these social functions with the necessary growth in the number of elected persons and the consequent extension of the Franchise. To attempt to hold up all this elaborate machinery would result in appalling chaos, far worse than anything described in the worst tales about Russia. If the capitalists ever

dreamed of taking such a course it could only be as a last act of despair when the circumstances and conditions would render such an action too late to be effective.

Trade unions are organisations that the conditions of capitalism bring into existence. They arise out of the imperative necessity which the workers are under of debating the price and conditions under which they sell their labour power. Their essential work is confined to the industrial field. Socialists as workers, are faced with the necessity of joining trade unions for the purpose of carrying on this daily struggle, just as other workers are. Inside the unions they use the opportunities offered to carry on Socialist propaganda.

The Labour Party is a political party supporting capitalism—see, for instance, its actions on the War, and the other evidence in our Manifesto—while its rank and file are obviously not anti-capitalist, or they would have compelled their representatives to oppose instead of supporting capitalism. Hence for a Socialist to join the Labour Party means supporting a defender of capitalism and is in direct contradiction to Socialism.

The Socialist works inside the trade union as he does outside, to develop the workers' knowledge of the slave position of their class. As their knowledge grows they will have their organisation on this class basis instead of on that of craft or industry.

It is easy to suppose all sorts of absurdities when endeavouring to place ideas developed from one set of conditions into an entirely different set. If the S.P.G.B. had been the S.P. of Russia, clearly the S.P.G.B. would have had all the misunderstanding and ignorance of the European situation that the S.P. of Russia had, and would have acted as the latter did. If, however, our correspondent means if the S.P.G.B. with its knowledge and understanding of European conditions had been in Russia in 1917, then that party, at all events, would not have made the great mistake of the Russians—the mistake of thinking that the working class of Europe were ready to rise in revolt against capitalism and to establish Socialism in its place.

Whether the Communists did the only thing possible is a debatable question, as full knowledge of all the circumstances is not yet available. The position of the S.P.G.B. at the time of the upheaval in Russia was that conditions there made the establishment of Socialism impossible. The evidence and events since then have shown the correctness of our analysis.

ED. COM.

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain.****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Mat-chew-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dene-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Com. sec. Applications to General Secy.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Secy., 142 Bulwar-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Green-wood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigdon-rd. Schools, opposite Hackney Downs Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Weds, Working Mens Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., E. Scotcher, 48 Tintern-st., Hanley, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Sec., J. Lloyd, 12 Chapel-st., Chester-rd., Hulme Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8, at Ex-mouth St. Schools (L.C.C.), Hampstead-rd., N.W. Communications to W. F. Tickner, 51 High-rd., Willesden-green, N.W.10.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Secy, J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Secy, 24 Worslade-rd., Tooting, S.W.17. Branch meets Fridays at Pa-riochial Hall, Church-ln., Tooting, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secy., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Dis-cussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Secy., 11 Csrilton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Secy., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mayes-rd., N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS  
LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 6.0 p.m.  
Finsbury Park, 6.0 p.m.  
Tooting Broadway, Junction Garrett-le. 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 8.30 a.m. Stratford, Vicarage-l. 7.30

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Tuesdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junc. Clyde Rd., & Phillip Ln., 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's Hill, 8 p.m.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common own-ership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community

**Declaration of Principles****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great  
Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desir-ing enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 205. Vol. 18.]

LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1921.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

## THE DESPOTISM OF LEADERSHIP.

### MR. CLYNES' EXAMPLE.

Some months ago an article appeared in the **SOCIALIST STANDARD** wherein was given an analysis of the relations existing between certain individuals in the trade union and labour movement known as "leaders" and the unfortunate beings who constitute the "led." Certain further facts regarding leaders and leadership have come into the possession of the writer, and no apology is needed, in his opinion, for reverting to a subject which is of primary importance to all workers, and more especially to those who happen to be trade union members.

#### Doubtless!

It is tenable to suppose that few working-class men or women have either the time or the opportunity—or, for that matter, the inclination—to read the Official Reports of the Parliamentary Debates, so that in all probability the speech of the Right Hon. John R. Clynes on the 28th June last, on the occasion of the debate on the Settlement Terms of the Coal Industry Dispute, has escaped the notice of those people who would most benefit by its perusal. Doubtless it appeared, in a very attenuated form, in most of the daily papers; but as all capitalist newspapers can, and do, by the omission of certain parts of a debate or speech, give it such a turn as will best propagate the particular political views they hold, and as in no case, if they can possibly avoid it, do they print anything that would be likely to weaken or endanger the present capitalist system, no reliance can be placed on the reports appearing in the papers usually bought by working-class readers. To return to the speech in question.

#### Clynes' Candid Moment.

The opinion of the members of the Socialist Party with regard to the mentality of a man who is willing to submit to the dictation and authority of a "leader," or "leaders," is well known. But Mr. Clynes is even more severe than we are on those whom, at any rate, he is not too proud to represent, and on whose shoulders he has risen to his present eminence. He considers the trade union machine defective and out of date, and says that "the worst body of men, or the men least capable of forming a true judgment of their own interests, very often are the masses of the workmen themselves." He pleads "for the great masses of the workmen not merely to have greater faith in their appointed leaders, but to place in their hands the exercise of greater authority and power."

#### Gentle Sarcasm.

I trust that trade unionists will accept with their usual docility and meekness the opinion held by Clynes regarding their mental incapability and lack of true judgment of their own interests; that they will realise, if never before, what abject beings they are in comparison with a Right Hon. full-blown labour-leader; that they will never, never attempt to think and act for themselves, but will listen to the plea of Mr. Clynes and leave to him and his like the arduous task of performing (for a fee) all those social and political functions which the Socialist considers that a man who is worthy to be called a man should perform for himself.

#### By Bluff and Cajolery!

In the course of the speech, regret is ex-

pressed that the miners' leaders in the late coal dispute had no power and no authority, that they were not even able to negotiate in the sense of discussing in detail terms with the mineowners, that they were compelled to go and listen to what the employers had to say and then carry a message to some larger body, knowing even less than the members of the executive, the larger body in turn delegating the question to the masses of men, who knew least of all what had happened in connection with the discussions. One would think on reading this that the miners' leaders were only the mouthpieces of the mass of the miners, and that they could not accept the terms offered by the mineowners without consultation with the rank and file; but what actually happened was that at the crucial point in the negotiations the leaders (as is admitted in the speech) "dared to assume a power not properly conferred upon them," which Mr. Clynes says he is glad they did. They then, solely on their own responsibility, accepted what was offered, knowing, it is to be presumed, that by bluff and cajolery they could always persuade their followers to ratify whatever agreement was arrived at.

### Who Rules?

As a matter of fact, to anyone who takes the trouble to study the development of the late coal trouble, it will be apparent that the so-called consultations between the leaders and the mass of the miners were all so much nonsense. From the beginning to the end the men were in the hands of the leaders, who, actually, in their turn were in the hands of the employers and the Government. The dispute lasted just so long as was desired by the owners and no longer. When it was thought feasible that the men should go back, the employers' agents were able to persuade the miners' leaders "to assume a power not properly conferred upon them" and guarantee the return to work of the rank and file on the terms offered by the employers.

Clynes in the course of his speech thinks that "it will be a good thing for British industry if trusted and competent leaders, who in the nature of things come up closest to the real merits of the difference, and to the real facts in dispute, could be vested with greater authority." Apparently then, when a dispute arises between masters and

men, what the men's leaders have always to keep in view is, not the interests of those they are supposed to lead, but whether the method of ending the dispute will be "a good thing for British industry."

We have often contended that the majority of "leaders" seem to consider that their duty is to anyone or anything rather than to the men who have elected and pay them to attend to their interests; and certainly the official report of the speech here dealt with bears out this contention.

To any trade unionist who reads this article we Socialists say: Understand your class position as a wage slave, the evils rampant in society and how such affect you, and finally the means whereby your position as a wage slave may be changed to one of freedom. Is it not better to think for yourselves and act for yourselves, rather than to leave your thinking and course of action in the hands of men who only seem capable of leading their followers deeper into the quagmires of capitalism, leaving them more weary and dispirited at the end of each journey?

F. J. WEBB.

### A KNIGHT ERRANT.

The apologists of the capitalist class are hard put to it to explain away the contradictions of the system manifesting themselves in the enormous production of wealth on the one hand, and industrial crises, unemployment, and unrest on the other. Underlying and outcropping here and there in their speeches and writings is the endeavour to throw the blame for these phenomena on the workers. Any reason but the correct one is given; yet if the workman who reads the effusions of such apologists will carefully examine the words and phrases embodied in these speeches or writings, the fallacy of the "arguments" will be fully exposed.

In the "Birmingham Weekly Post" (26.6.21), Sir William Joynson Hicks, M.P., enters the ring and lays about him with his bladder of wind as follows:—

Among the main causes of industrial unrest—and most of them, when examined, are found to be quite elementary must be placed the fact that the workers of this country generally fail to realise that Great Britain lives internationally and not nationally.

If this means anything at all, it is that the workers are restless because they do not realise that trade is international. Well, when they do realise this, is it seriously put forward that unrest will disappear? The history of the growth of capitalism is against such a conclusion, for this world-wide development has, by bringing countries into communication with one another, unfolded to ever-increasing numbers of the workers of the world their identity of interest as an exploited class. Sir Joynson Hicks must try again: his "elementary cause" (not worthy of an elementary schoolboy) is not a cause, but just nonsense. He continues:—

If destiny had made these islands self-supporting in regard to food and raw materials, we should be able to pay as high wages as anyone could ever desire without fatal consequences. The only result would be that the purchaser would have to pay highly for everything he ate, drank, or bought.

"If" is a very useful word, and many an argument has been balanced on it by word-conjurors; but as Destiny has evidently set about her task indifferently, it would be better for the knightly champion to erect his defence of the capitalist system on a more substantial basis. However, for the nonce let us accept his assertions as quoted above. There would, then, be wages under this "if"; and it must also follow that there would be profits, with the further conclusion that classes of exploiters and exploited would be in existence. In short, Sir William has merely formulated on a small scale the capitalist system of society, a system which he apparently looks upon, in general, as the absolutely final form of social production.

It seems as though Sir William has a difficulty in discovering a theory which will stand the test, and hides this deficiency behind a shower of verbosity.

Let us follow the adventurous knight into the depths of his argument.

But we are not self-supporting either in regard to our food supply or in regard to the raw materials we require for our industries. That fact entirely alters the case. We are a nation of manufacturers and traders, and wages here are determined largely by conditions in other countries.

There is just one addition necessary to the above; after "manufacturers and traders" should follow "wage slaves." However, as this country is not self-supporting, and "wages are determined largely

by conditions in other countries," it appears that he is making out a fine case for international unrest; but of course that is not his intention, for if the British unrest can be exorcised by falsely showing the foreign workers as enemies of the British workers, then he will have done his bit and earned the reward of fidelity from his masters. While our knight admits that Great Britain lives internationally and not nationally, he desires, and those whom he upholds desire, that the workers will think nationally in terms of competition against the workers of other nations, and accept this competition as a permanent law. The possibility of such a culmination is inconceivable to anyone who gives a moment's thought to the subject; yet, nevertheless, there are many people who are influenced by the spurious arguments of the supporters of the present system.

Continuing, Sir William tells us that—"The laws of political economy have to be taken into account." As to what those laws are, we are enlightened more or less in the next sentence:—

We have to remember that Nature still rewards the unskilled labourer with only just sufficient to provide him with the bare necessities of life. The unskilled worker to-day is no better off than before the war; he is still subject to the same inexorable laws which ruled our rude forefathers after they left the Garden of Eden.

The admission that the unskilled worker is no better off to-day than before the war, is noted, but it would seem almost unnecessary that the statements before and after the admission should have to be attacked at this period of scientific literature and research. But, unfortunately, verbosity in speech and writing is accounted something by numerous people who do not critically examine the phrases of men professing to be the friends of the workers, but who are in reality their enemies.

Now, what is generally understood when we speak of the laws of political economy? We mean those laws which underlie the production and distribution of wealth. Hence, as the parliamentary knight professes to be concerned with these laws within the present system, why are we carried back to the "inexorable laws" of Nature?

From the time our progenitor, savage man, discovered how to make fire, to fashion and use the club, the spear, the bow and arrow, etc., we have travelled further and further away from the "in-

exorable laws" which are such useful phrases in the armoury of the capitalist economist.

With every improvement of tools and weapons, with every fresh invention and discovery, man has found himself better able to cope with natural forces, thus nullifying, so far as mankind is concerned, the tendency "to multiply beyond their means of subsistence" ("Descent of Man," page 94). Under the present system, based as it is on the private ownership of wealth, the necessities of life can be produced in a shorter time and in vaster quantities than in any previous system. The machines socially operated have been socially produced, and the commodities piled up in the factories and warehouses are the embodiment of social labour; it is, therefore, the mission of the working class to convert the privately owned instruments of production into the property of the whole community.

But Sir William Joynson Hicks would have us believe that wealth sufficient and ample for all cannot be produced, and that it is a law of Nature which "rewards the unskilled labourer with only just sufficient to provide him with the bare necessities of life."

After the Garden of Eden the valiant knight arrives immediately at the machine age, for he continues: "When machinery comes into use the skilled man holds an advantage over the unskilled, but he is still in competition with underpaid and more efficient labour in other countries. That of itself prevents his wages rising beyond an economic level, beyond a level which similar work commands elsewhere."

Now in reference to the above, it is hardly necessary to say that it is only as long as the work of the skilled man cannot be done by a machine that the skilled man holds an advantage, but there are very few trades at the present day which have not been affected by progress in machine construction and in the division of labour, thus causing special skill and strength to become superfluous. This development makes it possible to replace the labour of men by that of women and even children. With the introduction of machinery begins wholesale exploitation of the most helpless, who fall victims to revolting ill-treatment and spoliation. The capitalist system of production effects an enormous increase in the number of workers at its disposal, and there is also an ever-increasing productivity

of human labour in consequence of the progress in technical improvements and inventions. Further, capitalist exploitation increases also the possibility of using the labour power of the individual to the highest degree by speeding up the workers.

The laws of political economy—and there should be no need to emphasise this—are quite different from the "inexorable laws" of Nature. Competition amongst the workers for the bare means of subsistence has no law of Nature basis, neither has capitalism itself; and the system, with the competitive struggle which it entails, can only continue so long as the workers fail to realise the necessity for changing the whole basis of society from private to social ownership.

After discussing the cost of coal and iron, claiming the necessity of cheaper production of these, Sir William says: "To my mind there are only two ways of reducing our cost of production: either we must work longer or we must work cheaper." This is a rather interesting statement, as there are included, apparently, the diligent knight and his capitalist friends; but he slipped: there is no likelihood that they will show the workers how to do it even to the extent of working one hour, much less "only seven hours a day."

Our capitalist apologist says: "Very few politicians care to tell the public the truth, but here I have stated no more than the bare truth."

Of course, it is no news that politicians find great difficulty in telling the truth, and one must compliment the knight on his endeavour to become master of a great accomplishment. He is under the impression that he has succeeded where others failed, and does not, perhaps, realise that he distorts the truth by arguing from a false basis. He has a great respect for Trade Unionists, and appeals to them to apply "their common sense to get us out of our difficulties"; and he whines that "the Belgian worker puts in eleven hours to our seven." Brave little Belgium! It seems that every British worker must have been seized with a "desire for doles" instead of a "greater desire for work"; but may I suggest that the markets were supplied with the commodities required for the time, and that unemployment arises from the capacity of the working class to produce vast quantities of wealth and the

inability to buy commodities to the extent of the values produced. The capitalist class, on the other hand, cannot immediately squander all of the wealth of which they rob the workers; therefore, arising from these facts, the markets of the world are periodically glutted with goods, an industrial crisis sets in, and millions of workers are unemployed. These crises occur more often than formerly, and embrace a wider area, so that for politicians, Coalition or Labour, to tell the workers to work longer or work harder amounts to directing them to worsened conditions, a fact with which they are generally well enough acquainted.

There is one thing more to be said: the time is not far distant when the words with which Sir William concludes his case, "unless a man work, neither shall he eat," will be fulfilled. And that will be when this system has been placed in the museum of antiquities, and capitalists and their henchmen have ceased from troubling; a time when men will no longer be, as the poet finely puts it:

"Even as the slaves by force or famine driven  
Beneath a vulgar master to perform  
A task of cold and brutal drudgery,  
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,  
Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine,  
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade  
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth."

D.

### AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY.

In the "Labour Gazette" for July, 1921, some interesting facts are brought to light. We are told that the Agricultural Wages Board appointed a Committee in December, 1920, "to inquire into and report upon the extent to which the Unemployment Insurance Act might be made applicable and beneficial to agricultural workers." This report has now been completed, and in their comment on same we are told: "There was a time when the distress arising from unemployment in agriculture, at least in certain years, was considerable. During the latter half of the 19th century, however, changes in the methods of farming and the extensive introduction of machinery, caused a great reduction in the number of men employed on farms, with the result that the smaller number who

were now employed enjoyed greater stability of employment." Here are some of the figures re-quoted from the report by the "Labour Gazette":—

	Regular Employees.	Casual Employees.
	(Males.)	(Males.)
July, 1914 .....	693,000	85,000
July, 1918 .....	501,000	53,000
January, 1920...	550,000	41,000

The point it is desired to show once again is that, with the development of the forces of production under Capitalism, there follows greater insecurity of life for the worker. To those who happen to qualify for employment—generally the more skilled and efficient—there follows corresponding intensity of conditions arising from the manipulation of the intricate machinery brought into being to increase the output *per hour per man*. The writer repeats, therefore, that which has always been insisted upon in these columns, that so long as the means and instruments for producing the requirements of the community remain the private property of the capitalist class, the conditions of the workers must inevitably tend to get worse. The only remedy is Socialism, the common ownership of these means and instruments for producing wealth.

The above illustration shows the need for the worker to study his position in capitalist society and organise for the establishment of Socialism. Under that system every device invented will shorten the hours of labour necessary for the production of the requirements and comforts of the human race. As Paul Lafargue so brilliantly puts it:—

Mechanical production which, under Capitalist direction, can only buffet the worker to periods of enforced idleness, will, when developed and regulated by a Socialist administration, require from the producer to provide for the normal needs of Society, only a maximum day of two or three hours in the workshop, and when this time of necessary social labour is fulfilled he will be able to enjoy freely the physical and intellectual pleasures of life.

The artist *then* will paint, will sing, will dance; the writer will write, the musician will compose operas, the philosopher will build systems, the chemist will analyse substances, not to gain money, to receive a salary—but to deserve applause, to win laurels, like the conquerors at the Olympic games—but to satisfy their artistic and scientific passions; for one does not drink a glass of champagne or kiss the woman he loves for the benefit of the gallery." O. C. I.

## IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 7th July, 1921.

## Vote on Expenses of Mines Department.

In the discussion Major Barnes, putting forward a criticism of the Government's policy, gave an interesting explanation of the cause of the coal dispute.

Under Government control, coal during the war was exported to our Allies cut off from other sources of supply, at monopoly prices which reached an enormous figure. This was safe and exceedingly profitable while war continued, and for a considerable period afterwards, but it had effects, unforeseen by those responsible for the policy, but simply disastrous for the coal owners. Not only did it become cheaper for France to import from U.S.A., but also great importance was given to the demand for coal from Germany under the reparation clauses of the Peace Treaty. These factors soon brought about the almost complete destruction of British export trade in coal, which was the immediate cause of decontrol and the lock-out. Major Barnes' contention was that the Government should have foreseen and prepared for what was, in the circumstances, a natural development. Their reply did not dispose of his arguments, nor disprove the charge of failure to look ahead.

Sir Robert Horne admitted that the date of decontrol was deliberately advanced from August to March 31st in order that resistance from the miners might more effectively be met, and quoted from a speech made by F. Hodges where the latter had remarked on the weakening of the miner's position consequent on this manoeuvre.

Mr. Gould, shipping owner, held high wages and low production responsible for the ruin of "our export trade," but was very pointedly reminded of the huge and unnecessary shipping freight rates during the war. Mr. Adamson also showed how the productive power of the miners had been lessened by the hardships of war service.

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Although the Government had spent approximately £20,000,000 in coping with the emergency situation arising out of the lock-out, Col. Spender Clay admitted "that with very few lamentable exceptions there was a complete absence of disorder in every mining area."

When a request was made for an amnesty for political prisoners sentenced under E.P.A., Mr. Adamson (Labour Party) assured the Chancellor that "there is no section of the members of this house who fight Communism more bitterly than the members of this Party."

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Mr. Kidd made the suggestion that lasting industrial peace could be secured only by the Miners' Federation investing its funds in the industry and abandoning political notions. Every man would then become capitalist, producer, and consumer. There is a whole heap of brilliance of this kind in the House of Commons.

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One cannot help wondering why the miners send representatives to Parliament when they talk like this:—

R. Swann: "Although our men have returned to work, it is not because we have been convinced that the settlement is just, but largely because we are anxious that this nation shall hold its own. We want to see our country, which we think the best in the world, prosperous. . . . We are as loyal subjects, every one of us, as any other member of this House of Commons. . . . I want to see England once again the premier nation of the world."

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Friday, 8th July, 1921.

## War Pensions Bill.

The intention of this Bill is stated to be the securing of economy in administration, but not at the expense of any pensioner, "for that is a policy to which I would never be a party" (MacPherson). Ministers have, of course, been known to change their policy, and the insistent repetition of their love for the ex-Service man is almost sufficient ground for a suspicion that a reduction of pensions is contemplated; but for obvious reasons such a move requires careful preparation and a tactful approach. Wages having been brought down without any serious difficulty, pensions must follow. There is for the Government the comforting thought that pensioners die off fairly rapidly, the number amounting to 46,000 already, but that is too slow a process.

There are in all, including 917,850 children and widows, 3,500,000 persons on the pension list. Much of the necessary work

has been in the hands of local War Pensions Committees, which although costing £20,000,000 were virtually independent of the Ministry. By centralising and economising, the staffs of the Committee are to be reduced by one-third at a saving of from six to twelve million pounds.

Almost all of the speakers emphasised their determination that pensions should not be touched; but with reservations that conveyed a somewhat different impression.

Major Entwistle: "No one ever dreams, of course, of attacking any money that is expended on pensions."

but "there have been experiences of irregular payments. There have been experiences of some Committees which have paid a great deal more than others, and I am sure the House does not desire that."

"You ensure that undeserving people are prevented from getting that to which they are not entitled."

Of course the House did not desire "that," but if it had been proposed to remove irregularities by standardising upwards instead of downwards, it would have been found that the House did desire "that" very much.

Col. Freemantle was more candid. "We have always excluded the question of pensions as being naturally outside the scope of possible economy, and we now have to eat our own words, and reconsider our declarations on the subject of economy . . . and we shall have to go before the country and say we are considering economy in the matter of pensions, too."

The Major showed, too, another indirect way in which pensions will be reduced. Fear of losing his pension at a future re-examination may induce a disabled man to accept a lower amount because it is made permanent. "This clause will result in the saving of administrative expenditure and a saving in the disbursement of pensions within the next few years, because there are a great many people who would much rather have a permanent pension of a slightly reduced amount, if necessary, than a larger pension for a short period of six months."

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Remembering how much potential fighters were in demand in 1914 and the "salvation by khaki" that was then preached for those who had transgressed capitalist laws,

but who could and would shoulder a rifle, it is interesting to note the present attitude of our rulers.

Those ex-soldiers who think they have a right to recognition from the owners of the country for which they fought are "undeserving people" now.

Lt.-Col. Freemantle: "We went into the highways and hedges and swept them in, and so long as they could pass the physical test by hook or by crook . . . there was no question about their moral or other worth."

The Lt.-Col., however, with the nobility of character for which the Empire and its officer class are justly famous, finds means of dealing with these "weary Willies." He has spies (no doubt of equal "moral worth" with himself) who stand by their comrades by acting as informer to their employer. "I have in my employ, I am glad to say, two men . . . who keep me informed of some . . . of the tricks that go on."

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The Labour Party, as one would expect, was supporting the Government in this measure, although suggesting amendments such as the lengthening of the period during which applications for pensions could be made.

In accordance with their customary policy, they are always at hand ready to assist the capitalists to cheapen the cost of administration, until finally, having won their confidence, the whole task shall be entrusted to a Labour Government; unless in the meantime the workers find out that this economy is not their business, and the party interested in it not their party, and decide to abolish the system instead of trying to improve it.

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People who believed the assurances given from time to time that various ex-service men's organisations were non-political, etc., would do well to note the following remark made by Major Cohen, Treasurer of the "British Legion."

"That Legion is out to help the Government, and not only this Government but any future Government, with no conditions whatever. They are out entirely for constitutional Government."

E. H.

## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

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## The Socialist Standard,

THURSDAY



SEPT. 1, 1921

## MORE COMMUNIST CONSISTENCY.

The Communist Party put forward a candidate for the Caerphilly election. The Election Address, published on the 13th August, in a foreword, pointed out:

"The opportunity is to be welcomed, too, for the chance it gives the Party of expounding its aims and objects in such a way as will mark it as a force distinct in kind and degree from alike its rivals and the malevolent caricature that these have substituted for the reality of Communism and its Party.

"Pledged as it is to Political Action, the Communist Party is enabled by this opportunity to demonstrate just how far and in what way Revolutionary Political Action differs from the creeping thing the worker has learned to know and to hate as Parliamentarism."

If the election has provided the Communist Party with an opportunity to explain the meaning of Revolutionary Political Action, then that party has certainly failed to take advantage of this opportunity. There is no indication whatever in the election address of what action the candidate is to take if elected. In fact, this address consists of little more than a few general statements, a few slings at the Labour Party and the Triple Alliance, and the usual thread of sensationalism running through. Nowhere does it contain information useful to the workers who are urged to vote for the Communist candidate.

Of course, like all so-called "practical" parties who are going to "get there quick,"

"immediate" measures had to find a place in the address, and so we learn that "The Communist Party demands for the Unemployed work or maintenance at full Trade Union rates." The coal-miners, railwaymen, engineers, and so on, find that "full Trade Union rates" are not sufficient to secure them the means of decent living, and consequently they are always struggling to increase these rates. But this insufficient amount, or "Work," is what the Communist Party demands for the unemployed. Is this, then, what constitutes "Revolutionary Political Action"? The right to work is anything but a revolutionary idea. In fact, the demands for work on the part of the self-styled working-class parties incited Paul Lafargue, on one occasion, to write his celebrated pamphlet on the Right to Leisure.

Another of the "revolutionary" demands in this address is Independence for Ireland. The satisfaction of this demand would simply be the setting up of an independent capitalist Ireland, obviously no concern of the working class. It is also curious to note that the demand for Irish Independence immediately follows a paragraph demanding "the solidarity of the Workers in all Lands against the International Class that thrives on their subjection." The latter demand is in contradiction to the demand for Irish Independence. If the workers of the world unite against the international capitalist class for the overthrow of the system that robs them of the product of their toil, their international policy will be one of opposition to the capitalists of all nations—there is no room for an anti-Socialist policy that includes aiding the capitalists of subject nations to achieve their independence.

The address concludes with the stage heroics of Sinn Fein. The electors are asked to vote for a man who is in gaol! The man is an important point in the business, the duties he is to perform are too insignificant for space to be afforded to describe them.

From beginning to end the whole address is, in reality, nothing more than an ordinary vote-catching manifesto; sufficiently vague and illusive to bring them a measure of support from the unthinking.

An election where a Socialist candidate is put forward in the early days of Socialist electoral action, provides information of the

progress towards Socialism in the constituency where such a candidate is put forward. If, however, those voting in his favour do so purely on emotional grounds, and if care is not taken to make full use of the opportunity by spreading knowledge of Socialist principles, then the election is useless and a waste of time from the Socialist point of view. Again, if a candidate is returned on a wave of emotion (such as the Communists are trying to stir up in Wales), he cannot take up the Socialist position in Parliament without, sooner or later, arousing the antagonism of certain sections of the voters who sent him there. Emotion, unless backed up by sound knowledge, changes its direction like a weathercock. The result of such an election would be the arousing of false hopes and a false estimate of progress to be followed by disillusion, disappointment, and depression. Delegates, so compromised at the outset of their Parliamentary activities, are hedged around with pitfalls and foredoomed to further compromising action later on.

It is humorous to remember that prominent members (some of whom are at present on the Executive) of the Communist Party lately proclaimed the utter uselessness of any form of Parliamentary action, and advocated abstention from electoral struggles. But this is on a par with many other absurdities and contradictory policies of this "united" party.

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## THE "WISDOM" OF A "CAPTAIN OF INDUSTRY."

Happening to glance through an old copy (1.6.21) of the "Daily News," the writer came across an article by H. Gordon Selfridge entitled "The Fixed Price Fiction." As one or two of the points raised in the article are an interesting example of the lack of knowledge, or the deliberate perversion of the truth, of a leading capitalist, a column will be usefully occupied with a few comments on them.

Mr. Selfridge sets out with the following statement:

"The present condition of things exists because the buying abilities of the peoples of the world has been diminished. . . . It is a phase, and a phase which can be overcome by time and hard work."

How fond is the capitalist of preaching "hard work"! Mr. Selfridge's alleged solution to the problem will not be very satisfying to those hundreds of thousands who are tramping, far and wide over this country, looking for the hard work that eludes them like a will-o'-the-wisp. A week or two ago hundreds of unemployed waited all night outside a London timber yard to answer an advertisement for a few porters; some of them had walked many miles (one was reported to have walked from Portsmouth, and others from a still greater distance!), on the chance of getting work. Only the other day about four thousand workless lined up, and waited for hours, in Holborn, on the same errand. All over the country "short time" and the discharging of workmen is the order of the day. The fact is there are many slowly dying at the present moment on account of the lack of the hard work that Mr. Selfridge advocates.

The tragic side of the situation is that, from one point of view, hard work has had much to do with the bringing about of the present state of affairs. Hard work on the part of the working class in the past has been the means of devising and building the stupendous machinery and methods of production which render so many workless today. Wealth is turned out so rapidly, and so prolifically, that all effective demands are met almost immediately they are known, and factories and shops are overflowing with the goods for which there is no customer with the wherewithal to buy. At the same time would-be workers are walking

about starving, ill-clad, and badly sheltered for want of the very goods for which the owners can find no buyer; and (the irony of it!) these unemployed workers have been thrown out of employment because too much wealth has been produced! Instead of hard work solving the problem it has brought about the problem itself.

A little farther on in his article Mr. Selfridge makes a statement that is often heard by the Socialist; a statement that is becoming hoary with age. It is usually put forward as a clinching argument to prove that the existing method of producing wealth has always been in operation, and must go on to the end of time. The statement referred to is as follows:—

"Production for one's own individual use is both made possible and limited by one's own individual requirements. But production for the use of other people can be based on nothing else than the profits of the one who goes out of his way to so produce. We should very soon find that no profit meant no production, for there must be an incentive to work of that kind."

With minor exceptions the whole of the work involved in the production and distribution of wealth under capitalism is performed by the working class. The working class performs this work in return for wages that, on the average, barely allow the members of that class to live, and to reproduce their kind. Consequently "the one who goes out of his way to so produce" does not do so for a profit; he works in order to live. The profit incentive only concerns the capitalist; the individual who does not take part in wealth production.

A sufficient refutation of Mr. Selfridge's contention is contained in the record of the numberless inventors, artists, and scientists of all types, who underwent years of drudgery in following the path that attracted them, with no other hope or reward than life-long poverty and a pauper's grave. Here and there we have the illustration of more fortunate individuals, placed outside the necessity of working for a livelihood (for example, Darwin, and Robert Owen for the greater part of his life), who have occupied almost the whole of their lives with arduous labour that not only brought no return in the shape of profit, but actually used up a considerable portion of the wealth they already possessed.

Finally, let it be borne in mind that, in the past, wealth was produced and distri-

buted for thousands of years under different forms of communism before the conditions that developed the idea of profit existed.

GILMAC.

### GEMS FROM LAFARGUE.

"Science, the great emancipator, that has tamed the powers of nature, and might in so doing have freed man from toil to allow him to develop freely his faculty of mind and body; science, become the slave of capital, has done nothing but supply means for capitalists to increase their wealth, and to intensify their exploitation of the working class. Its most wonderful applications to industrial technique have brought to the childrer, the women and the men of the working class nothing but over-work and misery."

"In former stages of society, famine appeared only when the earth refused her harvests. In capitalist society, famine sits at the hearth of the working class when granaries and cellars burst with the fruits of the earth, and when the market is gorged with the products of industry."

"All the toil, all the production, all the suffering of the working class has but served to heighten its physical and mental destitution, to drag it down from poverty into wretchedness."

"Only through the class struggle can modern socialism realise its social ideal, which possesses the qualities demanded of any hypothesis that claims a scientific character. The fact of choosing a scientific goal, and of trying to reach it only through the class struggle, distinguishes it from the Socialism of 1848, which was pursuing through the reconciliation of classes a social ideal which could not but be utopian considering the historic moment in which it was conceived. Socialism has thus evolved from Utopia into Science."

"When science subdued the forces of nature to the service of man, ought she not to have given leisure to the workers that they might develop themselves physically and intellectually; ought she not to have changed the 'vale of tears' into a dwelling place of peace and joy? I ask you, has not science failed in her mission of emancipation?"

### THE ORDER OF ST. CATHERINE.

On July 22nd, the "Daily News" published the report of an interview with Professor Patrick Geddes, in the course of which he said: "A coming discount of women is imminently threatened, and is indeed in accelerating progress."

The same newspaper then asked Miss Margaret Bondfield, Secretary to the Federation of Women Workers, for her views on Professor Geddes' remarks. Miss Bondfield confirmed them and proceeded to show where she believes the remedies lie. "To perpetuate the idea that marriage is the sole aim of woman's life," she said, "is to court disaster. Many hundreds of thousands of women must make up their minds that there can be no marriage at the end for them. They must, therefore, be trained to take a real interest in their career. There need be no disaster if their instincts can only find a wholesome way out." (Quotations are from "Daily News" of July 23rd.)

Miss Bondfield suggests "social work" as the outlet, particularising child welfare, maternity work, and administration.

This is her way of meeting the emotional case. For the economic: "One thing is vital—our young people must be sent back to school to learn discipline. The wickedest crime of the Government has been the shutting down of educational facilities and the curtailing of continuation school education at the present time, especially when unemployment is so bad. These young women are thus thrown upon the world unprepared. *If it costs millions, they must be got back to school.* The machinery is all ready. The Central Committee for Women's Training and Employment" (of which Miss Bondfield is a member) "has done wonderful work; it has handled many thousands of cases, and given training varying from six months to five years in different cases. *The instrument is at hand, if the Government will only use it.*"

To which the "Daily News" adds this explanatory note: "The Committee to which Miss Bondfield refers was set up last year. It was allowed £500,000 from the National Relief Fund and £100,000 left over from the Queen's Work for Women Fund. It includes such names as Miss Mary Macarthur, Miss Violet Markham, Miss R. E. Lawrence, and Dr. Marion Phillips; and its function is to arrange for

the training of women whose capacity of earning a livelihood has been injured or handicapped by conditions produced in the war. Application forms can be had at any Labour Exchange."

Now it is true that even in a society where no outside impediment existed, not even an inequality in the numbers of the male and female populations, every woman would not marry. Many in whom the inclination is strong are not so happy as to find the husband to please them; and in the chances of human sentiment it often happens that when the desired mate is found he is not to be won. There are, besides such disappointed women, others (as there are men) whose energies are bent upon the pursuit of an exceptional purpose, and who are not at all concerned with the business of sex and parenthood. The artist is the type of these. The world's history records the names of many such who are immortal. Miss Bondfield is right in thinking it neither possible nor desirable that women should make marriage their only goal.

Reference has often been made in these columns to the early scenes in mankind's social life, where arose the idea that women's only proper vocation was domestic. There, social production did not require women's labour; their service became a private service within the family.

But modern industry has a use for the labour-power of women, and the view of what is suitable work for them has been much modified. Hitherto in the history of capitalism employers have encouraged the presence of women in the labour market; they constituted an abundant supply of cheap labour-power. But with the rising wages of women consequent upon improving organisation, and the falling wages of men resultant from widespread unemployment, the preference is rapidly being transferred to men.

And what value have Miss Bondfield's remedies?

Suppose the fullest use of her Committee: what can it accomplish? It can ensure that women shall compete on equal terms with men for such posts as are to be filled. But since in its normal workings capitalist production never needs all the labour-power that offers itself, and since what it does need is relatively a diminishing quantity, all that the Committee can

do is to change the personnel of the army of unemployed: substitute some hungry men for hungry women, incidentally providing the master class with better-trained, more serviceable material. And even of this excellent thing one can have too much, the employers think: do they need Miss Bondfield to point out the virtue of the "instrument at hand"? Since it would appear that there is no lack of workers sufficiently well trained to do what is required of them, and no near prospect of such a lack, the shutting down of educational facilities is a measure of praiseworthy economy, from the capitalist point of view. And surely Miss Bondfield knows better than to expect another point of view from any Government? Whoever heard of a commercial concern spending "millions" to obtain a brand of commodity of which a sufficient supply was already to hand?

The awakened woman worker has a different word to say. It is this: That her only sure way to a happier life lies with the men of her class: that she does not benefit by readjustments of the common burden of subjection: that the only action for her is that which shall remove the burden altogether. And such is Socialist action. Suppose that triumphant, you have a world where no man is compelled to celibacy by want of means to maintain a family, and a woman need be neither man's huntress nor his rival.

May we suggest to Miss Bondfield that here is the cause to claim the devotion of working women. The poverty and degeneration which move the compassionate to throw themselves into "social work," are allied to the sordid snatching of one another's bread. They are features of the same evil system of social life. And the ameliorative measures which Miss Bondfield would like to see women administering, being concerned only with isolated features, leave untouched such a sea of misery as must make a thinking "social worker" despair. To sweep away the source of it all: that alone is the work for the clear of sight.

A. I.

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### THE HOPE OF THE UNEMPLOYED.

The attitude of the vast majority of the unemployed is one of more or less patient waiting for something to turn up. Their hopes are based upon a revival of trade, an increase in the demand for commodities, particularly for that commodity they, individually, desire to sell, or are in the habit of producing, and consequently the possibility of a job. "It can't last much longer," is a phrase one frequently hears: "the wish is father to the thought!"

Now what is the probability of the realisation of this great hope of the unemployed? We were told that the "coal stoppage" came at the very moment when trade was beginning to brighten up. As soon as the miners went back to work the papers proclaimed the millenium. "Now for a good time," shouted one. "No more bad trade, no more unemployment, if only the miners get down to it and the workers work with a will." But the man on the Labour Exchange queue is still looking for the good times.

We are at the present time passing through one of those industrial crises which have periodically swept with such devastating effect throughout the capitalist world. The first considerable crisis took place in 1815 in circumstances somewhat similar to the present one, viz., after a war. From then on till the end of the nineteenth century, these crises recurred at intervals of from eight to ten years, the tendency being for the intervals to decrease. All sorts of explanations of these phenomena were sought. One "economist," Jevons, earned a place in the capitalist pantheon by tracing them to spots on the sun. They were attributed to the anarchy of production. This was true, but only a part of the truth. The anarchy of production merely accounted for the character of the crises, not the crises themselves. What the real cause is will be made clear in the course of this article.

In the early years of the nineteenth century production was carried on by an immense number of small, independent, competing firms. None knew what the others were doing. As soon as a demand manifested itself there was a rush to supply it. This fact by itself would have been sufficient to produce crises in the acute form in which they took place during the last cen-

tury. But in addition to this a large foreign trade was done.

Now, before the first successful Atlantic cable was laid in 1866, it took news as long to travel as the ship which conveyed it. The first steamship voyage across the Atlantic was made in the year 1825. But for many years after this, sailing vessels predominated, so that often months elapsed between the sending and receiving of a message. The effect of this was that from the time the demand for commodities abroad slackened cargoes would continue to be dispatched until the information reached home. Consequently, when the crash came it found many business firms with the bulk of their capital locked up in the form of unsaleable goods, hence inability to meet liabilities and wholesale bankruptcies.

Now all this is changed. Anarchy of production has to a considerable extent been done away with. In the cotton, soap, iron and steel, and tobacco industries huge trusts exist, and the production of these commodities which is not controlled by them is negligible. It was stated in a recent Government report that 90 per cent. of the soap production of this country was in the hands of a great trust.

Also news now travels with the speed of light; any falling off in demand is immediately known, and owing to the great centralisation of control the information is instantly acted upon. So that as a decrease in demand is immediately followed by a curtailment of production, we now have long-drawn-out slumps with intervals of brisk trade.

This all accounts for the change in the character of the movement of trade. What is the cause of the crisis? The cause is summed up in one word, overproduction. The powers of producing wealth increase enormously. Continually, labour-saving machines are being introduced, releasing large numbers of the working class to swell the ranks of the unemployed. Here are two recent instances. In an article which appeared in the "Daily Herald" (4.11.19), it was stated that the fitting of the "Aquitania" with oil-fuel burners in place of coal furnaces would save two-thirds of the stoking labour. Three hundred men constituted the stokehole staff prior to the change; slightly less than one hundred men were necessary to operate the oil burners. The utilisation of bunker space for cargo,

the different method of loading the new fuel, merely connecting up pipes and turning on taps, instead of armies of coal porters being employed, are further economies effected by the change.

Another instance I cull from the "Evening News" (25.7.21). Their special correspondent at Worthing went to see the working of a tomato-sorting machine which the "Worthing Fruit and Flower Co." had installed. It is claimed for it that it will do the work of about twenty men in an hour for a cost of just under threepence. The writer goes on to say: "It was particularly amusing to see the tomatoes being bobbed from hole to hole until the right one was found."

Amusing! To whom? To the twenty men displaced by the machine? Let us hope it affords as much instruction to the latter as amusement to the correspondent, and turns their thoughts in the direction of their own emancipation.

This is going on in all branches of production. The productive powers of labour are growing. We were told recently that the boot industry in this country could supply the needs of the home market in six months. In the event of no foreign market being found for the surplus product, the boot operatives are unemployed for six months in the year. This, of course, in turns reacts on the home market, as, obviously, people who are only partially employed cannot buy as many boots as people who are employed the whole year round. What is true of the boot industry is true of all other industries; in all there is a huge surplus product which, if not got rid of abroad, chokes the home market.

Now, during the nineteenth century England's chief export was textile goods, but gradually textiles gave place to machinery. This means that foreign customers instead of buying their commodities for direct consumption from England, bought the machinery to make them themselves; later on they make their own machinery and, incidentally, bang goes that beautiful dream of England becoming "the workshop of the world." Not only do these countries produce their own requirements, but it is not long before they also have a surplus to get rid of. As Marx says (Communist Manifesto, p. 10): "It" (the bourgeoisie) "compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of

production; it compels them to introduce what they call civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image."

What is true, then, of English industries is true of industries of all the "advanced" nations of the world; the productive forces are enormously in excess of the home demand. It is patent that to the extent that the competitors grow, the markets relatively shrink and there is an increasing difficulty in getting rid of the surplus.

What is the cause of this overproduction? Evidently overproduction is a relative term; what appears as overproduction from one point of view appears as underconsumption from another. The reason is that the working class receive in the form of wages a constantly diminishing proportion of their product. From generation to generation the working class, or the vast majority of them, merely get a subsistence, while the product per head grows by leaps and bounds. A simple illustration will show the proportion of his product which the worker gets.

About two years ago a football match, owing to a draw, had to be played in mid-week at Sunderland. The papers in that district kicked up quite a rumpus about it. The reason being that the loss in "output and wages" was estimated at £100,000. The "gate" was, in round figures, 50,000. Fifty thousand sons of toil took half a day off and the result was £2 loss in respect of each. Assuming ten shillings to be the average half-day's pay—an extremely liberal estimate—get your ready reckoner and work out the proportions taken by the worker and capitalist respectively.

It is clear, then, that unless the capitalist class can absorb the surplus, which, in spite of really heroic efforts, it cannot do, there will be more commodities than the market can stomach. With the increasing productivity of labour this situation must become worse and worse.

Therefore, although the anarchy of production has virtually passed away, we still have the phenomenon of the commercial crisis, but in the form of a prolonged slump.

To come from crises in general to the one which now prevails, and to the question we set out to answer, viz., "What are the

chances of a revival of trade?" Ordinarily the process of recovery from a crisis is a long one, and tends to become longer with each succeeding crisis. The present one has not yet reached its depth; the figures of unemployment published from time to time show a monotonous increase. In addition to this, the situation is aggravated by the "Peace," and the inability of the conquerors to agree about the division of the spoils of war, all of which decreases the possible market for English goods.

Then the ordinary process of substitution of machinery for human labour was considerably speeded up during the war. In fact, this was the war's most fundamental effect. There was a census of production taken in this country in 1907, and one was taken in the U.S.A. in 1909. A comparison of ten trades in both countries revealed the fact that whereas in England only 0.79 horse-power was used per worker employed, in the United States the horse-power used per worker was 2.62. This difference has now, I think, been considerably reduced, although the U.S. did not remain stationary in this respect.

Finally, Japan's export trade was four times greater, in money value, in 1919 than in 1914, while the same tale has to be told of the U.S. The "Times Trade Supplement," April 12th, 1919, says: "Compared with 1913 the exports have risen by nearly 150 per cent., and when it is added that last year's exports were equal to the combined pre-war export trade of the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, the stupendous nature of the figures becomes at once apparent."

We have then, firstly, decreased markets, secondly, a phenomenal increase in the productive powers of labour, enabling a given demand to be supplied in a far shorter time, and, thirdly, an enormous increase in international competition. It does not require a mathematician to work out the result.

The present situation is likely to remain unchanged for an indefinite period. In fact England is no longer the largest producer in the world, and the working class population will have to accommodate itself to the requirements of capital.

What a bright prospect! Yet there is an alternative. The situation could be alleviated to-morrow and changed entirely in a few months if the working class but knew how and desired it. The means of pro-

duction being owned by and operated entirely in the interest of a class, obviously the remedy is to deprive them of this ownership, socialise the means of life, enable every able person to take part in productive work, and, by that means, inaugurate an epoch in which the productive process—the mere grubbing to maintain an existence, which occupies most of our waking and many of our sleeping thoughts—take a relatively subordinate place, leaving our time and our thoughts free for the pursuit and enjoyment of art, science, literature, sport, etc.—that high enjoyment of life made possible only by millions of years of evolution in the means producing the necessities of life.

T. D.

### A DISCOVERY.

According to the "Daily Chronicle" (30.7.21), the "Labour Joint Committee" have just discovered that the Government figures on the cost of living are inaccurate. To the average worker this has been common knowledge ever since the first figures announcing a reduction in living costs were published. Labour leaders all over the country have blindly accepted the Government figures, and advised the workers to agree to wage reductions on the ground that it meant cheaper production and lower prices. They have been utterly discredited in the actual results. Ever since the reductions in wages commenced, prices of the necessities of life have been steadily rising.

Labour leaders have also repeatedly told the workers that it was their duty to increase production by every means in their power. The Socialist Party, on the contrary, has continuously pointed out that increased production, whether as a result of greater efficiency or labour-saving machinery, can have but one result: an increase of unemployment.

In their report the "Labour Joint Committee" make a tardy and incomplete acknowledgment of this indisputable fact. They say that "until the worker has security of tenure in industry, occasions will arise when 'ca-canny' will appear to be the lesser of two evils." The second evil is, of course, unemployment, and with nearly two million registered unemployed, the worker who would race to finish his job to make one more would be a fool. On

the other hand, the capitalist pays his overseer to look after his interests, and if he is too slow to catch the worker who shirks unemployment, he too will find himself numbered among the unemployed. The worker has very little choice in the matter. He must either work hard and get the sack himself, or work hard and get his mate the sack.

"Ca canny," where it exists, and unemployment are proofs of the rottenness of the capitalist system. Men and women lack the necessities of life; they are forced to be idle by the capitalist class; yet, given access to the means of wealth production, they could produce the things they require in abundance. Capitalism compels the workers to produce for profits. The workers can only satisfy all their requirements when they make the means of wealth-production common property and produce for use.

F. F.

### A REMARKABLE PROPHECY.

"Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam, afar,  
Drag the slow barge or drive the rapid car,  
Or on wide waving wings expanded, bear  
The flying chariot through the fields of air,  
Fair crews triumphant, leaning from above,  
Shall wave their fluttering kerchiefs as they move,  
Or warrior bands alarm the gaping crowd  
And armies shrink beneath the shadowy cloud."—*Erasmus Darwin, 1791.*

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

## UNEMPLOYMENT.

Tragedy or Farce?

Notwithstanding the claim, advanced by the daily press, that trade shows signs of revival, the unemployed figures are still in the neighbourhood of 1½ millions. A writer in *The Observer*, described as an expert and a member of Lord Saint David's Committee, says: "The crisis is a real one, and doubts if any responsible leader in industry would maintain that the volume of available employment in this country can be increased to any appreciable extent before next June." Another paper—*The Sunday Pictorial*, September 4th—says that the official figures on unemployment are misleading, because they take no account of those who have exhausted their unemployed pay, a body that grows in numbers every week. The *Daily Chronicle*, September 6th, gives the number of unemployed in the United States as six millions. In Russia and Austria, we are told, millions are actually starving. In fact, the workers of every country are unemployed to an extent never yet experienced, with one exception. We are told that Germany is the exception, and that unemployment there is scarcely known. If this is true, it is not the first time that the workers of a losing country in a great war have been better off than the victors. The same thing was noticed after the Franco-Prussian war in 1871. Some people might argue from this that the way to fuller employment for any country was to have a good war with a neighbouring country and lose it!

Such an argument, however, is on a par with the general capitalist principle that working-class prosperity in one country can only be built up on the unemployment and impoverishment of the workers of other

countries. That is necessarily the outcome of the capitalist contention that unemployment can only be reduced by the capture of foreign trade. During the war the capitalist press insisted on the capture of the enemy's trade in various directions, and, boasting continuously that it was a business war, prophesied greater prosperity for British capitalists and workers as the result of victory. But their prophesy was falsified, and the only fact that has been demonstrated is that the abnormal prosperity of any one country can only occur when other countries fall behind in the race for markets.

In normal times unemployment is fairly evenly spread over all capitalist countries, partly because depressions, when they come, affect them all, and partly because workers are attracted to those countries where trade is on the increase. The passage of workers from one country to another is facilitated by capitalist governments because a large army of unemployed insures cheap labour-power to the capitalist, who can sell his commodities cheaper than his foreign competitors with no reduction in his profits. But cheap labour-power to the capitalist means a lower standard of living to the workers. We thus see that the capitalist remedy for unemployment—capture foreign trade—is a delusion for the workers, because its application means worse conditions for themselves and increased unemployment for their fellow-workers abroad.

No single country can find a solution to the unemployed problem. It is a question that affects the workers of every capitalist country equally. The solution must, therefore, be one that can be applied all round; it must be universal. Now, Socialism is

international. As a remedy for unemployment it must be applied universally, and because it fulfils that condition should take precedence in the workers' consideration. Before examining the full claims of Socialism on the workers' attention, it might be interesting to glance at some of the suggested remedies, the hypocritical platitudes and solemn warnings of our masters and their agents. When facing a question of such magnitude, every suggested remedy should be carefully examined before being discarded or adopted.

At first sight unemployment insurance appears to many to be a remedy. Many who think so only find out their mistake when they have exhausted their unemployed pay and have failed to find a situation. Others find out their mistake in trying to live on it. But insurance cannot even be accepted as a suggested remedy, because it does not pretend to reduce unemployment. All that it does is to keep some workers from actually starving until the capitalist wants them back in the factory again. The *Daily Chronicle* (September 14th, 1921) contends that it is the best and the cheapest method of dealing with the problem. Referring to the immense volume of unemployment, they say that "it has been accompanied by singularly little acute distress or violent discontent." "Acute distress" for the *Chronicle* might mean any stage in the starvation process down to actual skin and bones, but there is no mistake about the satisfaction it feels that there has been little "violent discontent." Another item that gives satisfaction to the *Chronicle* is the fact that "by far the greater part of the 'doles' financial cost will be eventually recouped by the State from the contributions of employers and employed."

The chief advantage of insurance for the capitalists is that it is elastic in its application. It can be extended or reduced, in time or amount, to suit the severity of the trade crisis through which they happen to be passing. The *Chronicle* says that "it is the most scientific policy that any State has adopted. As compared with relief works, it covers much more fully the actual field of distress, while it also entails far less outlay." But the controversy over the relative values of the "doles" or relief works need worry the worker but little. Both will be applied while the crisis lasts and discontinued as soon as it is over. The

return of normal trade conditions, while it solves the problem for the capitalists at the moment, still leaves immense numbers unemployed, which increase with every such crisis.

In his presidential address to the Trade Union Congress, Mr. Poulton fell foul of several capitalist papers. Among many other things he said of little or no importance, was the outstanding declaration "that the facilities for producing goods were never more abundant or more efficient than to-day, enabling enormous quantities to be produced at very short notice. This, in its turn, whatever economists might say, had the effect of throwing out of employment multitudes of workers. It was no wonder that we heard at times of workers restricting output" (*Chronicle*, September 6th, 1921).

Mr. Poulton's remedy is to shorten the working week. But this, like the dole, is no remedy. With an 8-hour working day, the United States is no better than other countries, either in normal times or during the present crisis. If one country alone adopts this measure it inevitably falls behind in the race for markets, unless greater efficiency is exacted from its workers or more up-to-date methods and machinery introduced, or both. It is a well-known fact that American workers gain nothing by their shorter working day. The pace at which they work makes them cheap when compared with European workers.

On the other hand, a universally applied shorter week must remain the dream of impossibilists. Capitalist groups are too deeply engrossed in the struggle for markets to come to a common agreement among themselves on a question that might give the workers more time to think about and discuss their slavery and the way to escape from it. While if the workers were sufficiently united internationally and powerful enough to enforce a universally shorter week, they would be powerful enough to completely overthrow capitalism and establish Socialism.

So much for Mr. Poulton's suggestion. Now for the other capitalist agents of whom he fell foul. The *Daily Chronicle*, September 6th, 1921, refers to it as "the old blind idea that there is only a fixed amount of work to be done in the world, and that therefore the less one man does in return for his wages, the more there will be for others to do . . . He ought to know that

the amount of work available in the world tends to be diminished by every increase in the costs of production; and therefore that reduction of hours, however desirable it may from time to time be on other grounds, must in relation to unemployment normally exert a bad and not a good influence."

The latter part of this statement is entirely false. An increase in the costs of production which affected the world would make no difference whatever in the amount produced, other things remaining as they were. All that would happen would be that higher prices would rule all round. Goods would have their money name changed, including labour-power. Even this need not happen as a result of a shorter working week or higher wages. Under such circumstances competition might not permit capitalists to raise prices, in which case the workers would obviously be encroaching on profits, if the increased cost of production were due to higher wages.

Apart from this, however, it is only when one set of capitalists are faced with a rise in the cost of production, and are unable to compete in the open market, that they are forced to curtail or stop production. The proof of this is seen when we compare two countries like Spain and the United States. The former is a century behind the latter industrially, because it has never adopted to the same extent cheap and efficient methods of production. Yet America, with all its efficiency and cheapness—the qualities that exert a good influence on employment, according to the *Chronicle*—surpasses every other nation in the numbers of its unemployed.

This brings us to the "old blind idea" of the *Chronicle*. If low costs of production give more, instead of less employment, why do American factories periodically close down, stopping production while they unload their goods on the market? Why does every country do the same? Not because "there is only a fixed amount of work to be done in the world"—a phrase which only an ignoramus in economics would use—but because within a given period the demand for goods will be limited, if not by the needs of the people, by their ability to pay for them. In the next period the demand may be higher, or lower, but the outstanding fact is that the world's workers with modern means can always meet that demand with millions of idle days to spare.

Days of unemployment without wages spread over the working-class. Under a sane system of society, where production was carried on for use, instead of for capitalist profits, they would be days of rest or recreation.

The *Chronicle* was not the only paper that chastised Mr. Poulton for his suggestion. The *Sunday Pictorial*\* took a different line. One of its writers jeered at him because he "advised the workers to press for a shorter week," and then went on to say "that the needs of the world were under-supplied." This deep thinking agent of capitalism then asked, "How is the supply of things needed by the world to be increased by diminution of the hours spent in making them?" Let him ask any one of the millions of unemployed. They have hands and brains. Why are they idle if the world is under-supplied? Because it is not the needs of the world that determines the quantity of goods to be produced. The capitalist calls a halt when he can no longer sell at a profit. Or, to be strictly accurate, he only allows production to proceed when he receives orders that will enable him to realise profits. The *Sunday Pictorial* writer must be a first-class nincompoop if he thinks that it takes all the world's workers all their time either to meet the effective demand or satisfy the world's needs—two very different things. The fact that the world's markets are periodically glutted in normal times, and millions unemployed, with further millions working short time and many millions of days lost through industrial disputes, together with an enormous section of the population engaged in unproductive work, proves the contrary.

With modern machinery and methods, only a small proportion of the workers would be needed for actual production if kept continuously at work.

The biggest mistake made by the workers lies in their willingness to be led, instead of studying and discussing the question among themselves, whether in or out of work. All workers are subject to unemployment. No job under capitalism is sure; consequently unemployment is the concern of every worker.

There are always plenty of unscrupulous or mad-brained adventurers ready to pose

\* 11/9/1921.

as leaders where a number of people have a grievance. But even if they belong to the ranks of the aggrieved, it does not follow that they are to be trusted as leaders. At Liverpool the Rev. J. Vint Laughland advised the workless to capture the Art Gallery and led the attack personally. They captured the Art Gallery all right, but it proved to be a trap. The doors were closed, and in the words of an eye-witness, reported in the *Daily Chronicle*, September 13th, 1921: "A vestibule was crammed with men, who one after another went down under the blows of the constables' batons," and "a stream of injured men were led out or carried away on stretchers; while many more were led from the building in batches, and taken to the police station in vans under escort."

In Poplar, as in other districts of London where Labour councillors find themselves unable to fulfil their election pledges, they are confusing the issue by dragging in the question of rates equalisation, which is not the concern of the workers at all, but purely a question for the capitalists who own property in the different districts.

*The Observer* (September 24th, 1921) says that: "The real and permanent cure for the ills of Poplar, and other poor and populous districts now in like case, was, is and will remain the discovery of the essentials for co-operation among those engaged in production." In other words, those who have the luck to be employed must agree to terms that are acceptable to employers, and the unemployed—not being engaged in production—may be safely ignored.

Read where we may, in Capitalist or Labour journals, there has never yet been brought forward any scheme that can cure unemployment. Some boasted remedies, like co-partnership and guild-production, only aggravate the evil. Others, like insurance and relief works, do not affect it at all. In regard to the latter, *The Observer* (September 18th, 1921) says: "They must not compete with the legitimate opportunities of employment that trade will present as it recovers." When the capitalist wants workers to exploit, there must be plenty of unemployed in order that he may get them cheap. Equalisation of rates is a confusionist cry. A shorter week may or may not reduce unemployment. Electrification schemes, forestry, reclamation of foreshores, and widening of roads are things

that capitalist governments may want but dare not undertake because of the outcry against the necessary taxation or the interference with private enterprise. Capitalist governments are bankrupt in ideas to cope with the question. Their agents, political and industrial, religious or patriotic, and sympathetic or unsympathetic with the workers, are only concerned with their private ambitions. Sooner or later the workers will be forced to recognise these facts, and in increasing numbers will focus their minds on the question for themselves. Others will come into contact with genuine Socialist works and workers, and will be convinced that unemployment is the inevitable product of a system in which a small class owns the means of wealth production, and imposes upon the rest of society the necessity of selling their energy as a commodity, in order to obtain the necessities of life.

Without this knowledge the workers are the slaves of the employing class. With the knowledge lies their hope of emancipation. Determined to organise and act on their knowledge, they can, by first dispossessing the employing class of the means of wealth production, and secondly by making them the common property of society, to be used by all for the common needs, and controlled by all through the democratic administrations they deem it necessary to set up, realise their freedom and satisfy all their needs as freely associating men and women.

F. F.

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## "HIGHER PRICES MEAN FEWER JOBS."

J. A. R. MARRIOTT, M.P., on Unemployment.

Mr. Marriott has been offering a solution for the problem of unemployment, and the headline quoted above from the *Evening News* (September 13th) is the text he uses.

His article is more moderate in tone, and contains a larger measure of truth and accurate observation than one expects to find nowadays among those newspapers described as "competent to write authoritatively." He starts by making what must necessarily be for his readers a serious and distinctly unusual admission about industrial crises like the present: "Such crises have recurred at more or less regular intervals during the last century and a quarter," but he believes, in spite of this, "that the overthrow of the existing order would involve us in far more acute and general distress than anything we are likely to suffer during the difficult months ahead."

There is more truth in that last remark than Mr. Marriott thought, and I agree that for him it is not an unreasonable statement; but it is necessary to have clearly in mind to whom that "we" refers. "We," the comfortable and leisured class to which Mr. Marriott belongs, are not suffering from the prevailing unemployment, "we" never have so suffered, and, whoever else does, "we" shall see to it that "we" never do. But what of the future? If capitalism is overthrown, what happens to "us" and our privileged position? Is it not enough to make the most open-minded of the capitalist economists pause when they find the direction in which their investigations are leading them; to make them turn back from the path to the future which the workers alone can follow, and announce that the existing system is the sublime height of mankind's upward progress. "After us the deluge"?

"What, then, is the cause of the phenomenon of recurrent unemployment, and what is the appropriate remedy?" Mr. Marriott dismisses off-hand the "glib answer of the Communists" that capitalism is the cause, and work or full maintenance, and the immediate abolition of the system, the ultimate remedy.

He admits that crises are "the concomitant of the new order in industry initiated by the industrial revolution," and that unem-

ployment is "an incident—perhaps an inevitable incident—of large-scale production for a world market"; but this, he says, is not capitalism. I would like then to ask what was the "new order initiated by the industrial revolution"? What was it if not modern capitalism? Where can Mr. Marriott find an instance of "large-scale production for the world market" except under capitalism?

Although Mr. Marriott cannot face his own conclusions, he admits our case in its entirety. Unemployment is part, and an essential part of the system under which we live. He even goes so far as to speak of "that reserve of labour upon which the periodic prosperity of an industry is dependent." It is, in fact, just because Mr. Marriott cannot help but recognise, as we do, that capitalism and unemployment are inseparable, that he does not even claim to have found the solution he set out to discover.

The utmost he can do is to suggest the speediest and least difficult way out of the present state of stagnation, without touching what he himself admits to be the real problem, the recurring crises.

Again, he tells us that prior to the present era chronic unemployment was unknown. Why, then, must we acknowledge our impotence to escape an alleged "inexorable economic law" which had no terrors for our ancestors of some hundreds of years ago? Are we patiently to accept starvation for our class, knowing as we do that our powers of wealth production are a hundred times greater than then, just because of the class-biased economic theories of Mr. Marriott?

"So long as countries were self-supporting in agriculture and industry, crises occurred only at rare intervals, being the outcome of pestilence or famine, or some great upheaval in the natural world." Poverty is no longer the result of natural phenomena; it is a product of society itself, of artificially restricted production, and unequal distribution of the product.

Mr. Marriott criticises the "Communists" for wanting to return to pre-capitalist conditions, but does not give evidence that they ever propagated such an absurdity. Anyhow, we know, and Mr. Marriott knows, that it cannot be done.

The case Mr. Marriott has to meet is this. He admits the existence in the recent

past of a form of social organisation to which unemployment was unknown; he admits also the enormous increase of productivity since the inception of modern capitalism. What, then, is the factor, or what even is the kind of factor, which prohibits production for use instead of for private profit?

In further criticism of the "Communists" he cites the experience of Louis Blanc in 1848 with his "national workshops" and the application of the theory of "the right to work." He rightly says the provision of full maintenance for the unemployed is incompatible with the continuance of capitalism. Louis Blanc learned by experience what everyone now knows to be true. But here, again, Mr. Marriott might observe that the "Communist Party" have explicitly conceded the impossibility of their demand being met; it would mean "suicide for the capitalist class." Incidentally, it illustrates the dangerous tendency of "Communist Party" propaganda that the uninstructed sympathy of the unemployed should be gained by promises incapable of fulfilment.

Now we come to Mr. Marriott's remedy. It is that the wages of those still in work must be lowered. Lower wages—lower prices—more foreign trade—work for the unemployed.

It looks sound, but the chain has weak links. Firstly, lower wages mean not lower prices, but higher profits; and, secondly, this solution, if otherwise genuine, can only help one country at the expense of others. Can that be a solution for a problem of world-wide magnitude? There is no corner of the capitalist earth immune from the effects of industrial, commercial, and financial depression.

The argument that the workers must accept less wages to enable their employers to compete with the sweating "foreign" manufacturer is used in every country in the world, unfortunately with some effect. But has anyone ever heard of an employers' association which proposed to deal with such a situation by assisting the unfortunate foreign worker to organise and improve his status? No, because the capitalist will always sell his goods at the maximum the market will bear, and he knows that the paying of a wage higher than he can compel his employees to accept is a dead loss to him, a subtraction from his profits.

True, prices must come down, for the simple and sufficient reason that stocks in hands are great and the owners cannot all wait indefinitely for an increased demand. They want ready money, and must sell at a reduction, at a loss even. Every penny, therefore, they can knock off their labour costs is a clear gain to them. Hence Mr. Marriott's anxiety on behalf of the capitalist class to persuade the out-of-work that his enemy is the employed man who stands out against wage cuts. In conclusion, as against Mr. Marriott's dicta that "the utmost the workless can claim is subsistence," and that "those in work must be content with something not much above that level," our advice is, that while capitalism lasts, the workers, whatever their condition, in work or out, will get, and will be entitled to, just as much as they can compel the capitalist class to give them. It is to be hoped that they will soon become so dissatisfied with their meagre portion that they will join us in getting the whole lot, the earth.

E. R. H.

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Marx was a Communist, and as a Communist he understood the proletariat as being the *class-conscious* workers, possessing the revolutionary ideology necessary to carry out their task.

The above statement is taken from an editorial in "The Communist" (official organ of the Australian Communist Party), dated July 1st, 1921. It is not correct.

Marx has been accused of many things by dishonest opponents and ignorant would-be supporters alike, but he never said that. Various believed in different quarters to have caused the war, bitten the late King of Greece, and to have produced his whiskers to sicken the sight, and his terminology to fuddle the brain of Mr. Wells; he did none of these things.

For chronological reasons he can safely be exonerated from blame for Alexander's most unkingly exit, and his real motive for growing a beard is, as Mr. Macdonald said when asked why he supported the war, "in the hands of history."

Mr. H. G. Wells said he could not understand the word proletariat. It was not the truth, but journalism has a moral code of its own. It was intended for people not likely to be much interested in verbal

accuracy, and not likely to have read those other works where the word is frequently used by Mr. Wells in circumstances which make it quite clear that he attached to it the same definite meaning as it has for us. What Wells writes in the Sunday papers does not matter much, but here we have the "Communist" expounding tactical methods to be adopted by the workers, and as the editor rightly says about the Labour Party, those who would teach the workers should first have learned themselves; "the educator himself must be educated."

As these Communists claim for themselves more than the average intelligence, they ought to have no difficulty:—"This work (i.e., formulating working-class principles and policies) could only be done by those workers who by certain force of circumstance were endowed with greater power of intellectual penetration than the average workers possessed."

What Marx really did understand by the "proletariat" can easily be discovered from the "Communist Manifesto." I go to that for preference because of its brevity: even a Communist "in a hurry" can hardly plead "the revolutionary situation" as an excuse for not having stopped to read it.

Marx described as the proletariat in modern society the property-less wage worker. The mass of men and women, rapidly in process of becoming the most powerful numerically in every country in the world, who own nothing but their power to labour and who by reason of their being compelled to sell that power in order to live, stand face to face in an antagonistic relation to the buyers, the capitalist class.

A footnote to the 1888 edition by Engels gives: "The class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour-power in order to live." Nothing, you will notice, about "intelligence" or "class-consciousness"!

Again, in the text itself: "The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority"; and in reply to the question, "In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole," the answer is: "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."

In these quotations, as throughout the "Manifesto" and other writings, it is made abundantly clear that the statement attributed to Marx is utterly false. Why then was it made?

Mr. Wells told a lie to prove a certain theory on Bolshevism, and the "Communist" is guilty of a similar action. By misrepresentation of Marx they wish to support a piece of special pleading in favour of an indefensible case, the case for minority revolution.

Marx taught that the development of the system would produce in the workers that outlook, that class-consciousness, which would precede their organising to overthrow capitalist domination, but he expected the workers to emancipate themselves; he certainly did not teach them to rely on self-styled intelligent minorities.

As the editor himself pertinently says, "We have seen lately in England the disaster that followed trusting men who did not understand the proletarian conception."

We have.

Is it necessary for the Australians to follow the theoreticians of the Communist Party in order to repeat that experience?

E. R. H.

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SATURDAY



OCT. 1, 1921.

**FAMINE IN RUSSIA.**

To most of those who know the history of India under English rule, and of China during the nineteenth century, the huge advertisement of the Russian Famine by the Capitalist Press of this country must seem singularly strange.

In 1918 there were 6,000,000 people carried off by the results of famine—camouflaged as Spanish "flu"—in India. Yet not one-tenth of the space was devoted to this appalling catastrophe that there has been to the Russian Famine, though the former was immensely more disastrous than the latter up to the present. Huge numbers of people have died of hunger in China during the latter portion of the nineteenth century without receiving more than a few lines notice in the Capitalist Press.

Why this sudden solicitude for starving people on the part of our masters? Have they become tender-hearted overnight, and full of desire to ease suffering wherever it may be found? One need go no further than the nearest street to find the answer.

There will be found "heroes" from the trenches often without a limb or an eye, "patriots" from the munition works, and women from the shell factories, each and all proclaiming their want and misery due to lack of employment or support. The Executive Committee of the ruling class, known as the Government, stops the Housing Schemes, thus adding a large

number to the already immense army of unemployed, and then reduces the unemployed insurance pay, and so decreases the purchasing power—poor as it was—of those drawing such pay. Those in work have suffered reductions of wages in far greater proportion than the small fall in prices, and further reductions are threatened in all directions.

The class responsible for the forcing down of the standard of living of the workers, that looks on callously at the want and misery existing here among the masses out of work, and which rules an Empire where millions die of starvation in less than a year, cannot be accused of either sympathy or tender-heartedness towards the Russians. An explanation must be looked for elsewhere.

The various notices in the Capitalist Press are marked by a unanimity in charging the Bolshevik Government with being the cause of the Russian Famine. This statement is such a stupid lie that only the befuddled mentality of those who blindly follow that press and its teachings would accept it. The simple fact is that the extraordinarily dry spring and summer has affected Russia more than the rest of Europe because of her primitive methods of agriculture. This is aggravated by her lack of means of transport, though the Russian Government has made strenuous endeavours to improve this service during their control of power. The canting hypocrisy of this lie is shown by the fact that not one of the papers spreading it have attributed the famine in India to English rule, though there is a vast array of evidence to support such a contention.

Another point on which some of the Capitalist Press are openly, and others more guardedly, giving voice is the suggestion that the Russian Government is playing false over the matter of relief measures. Hence the demand for "committees of inquiry," "full control of supplies," etc. These demands only thinly veil the intentions of these capitalist ghouls. Under cover of these claims they would sort out the claimants for relief, and take care that only those opposed—really or apparently—to the Bolshevik rule would be assisted. A more sinister object that lies behind these moves is the attempt to use the famine as a means of entering Russia, and, under the claim of "full control of

**WHERE RUSSIA STANDS**

(continued).

Earlier in this series of articles we promised to examine more closely the oft-repeated assertion that the Russian Bolsheviks were carrying further, and in the same spirit, the movement begun by the Paris Communards in March, 1871.

On comparing the Commune with the Bolshevik movement we find that there are fundamental differences between them.

The first (and most important) difference that comes to our notice concerns the method of control. The Commune aimed at, and realised during its short life, control of affairs directly by the whole people; whereas the Bolsheviks aimed at control by a few. It is true the Bolsheviks, in some of their proclamations, have made it appear that the Russian masses were in control, but we have already supplied abundant evidence through these columns illustrating how different the actuality is from the appearance. In order to bring the Bolshevik position on this question clearly to mind again, we submit the following further illustration:

Nevertheless, we do not for a moment deny that our apparatus is rigidly centralised; that our policy towards the bourgeoisie and towards the parties of the compromising Socialists is repressive in character; that the organisation of our own Party, as a ruling Party which exercises a dictatorship through the Soviets, is of a militarist type.—("The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia," by N. Bucharin in the "Workers Dreadnought," 4/12/1920).

Such is the Bolshevik position—the antithesis of control by the masses.

What was the attitude of the Commune on this question? Let us permit Engels to give his evidence first.

In his introduction to the German edition of the "Civil War in France" (see "The Paris Commune," New York Labour News Co.), Engels points out that:

The members of the Commune were divided into a majority of Blanquists, who had also predominated in the central committee of the National Guard, and a minority, which consisted for the most part of members of the International Working Men's Association, who were adherents of the Proudhonian School of Socialism.

He then shows that both the Blanquists and Proudhonists did the very reverse of that which the doctrines of their school

relief," seize positions of power for the purpose of overthrowing the Russian Government.

Here, then, is the explanation of the beating of the big drum about Russia. Not charity, nor humanity, nor fellow-feeling for suffering millions in Russia, but the slimy endeavours of the foul capitalists of Europe to use the disaster there as a means of seizing control of Russia, with its vast natural resources—not for the well-being of the Russian workers, but for the profit of those engaged in the burglary.

While the capitalists are haggling over the sending of relief to the starving people in the Volga basin, they are supplying huge quantities of munitions to Poland and Rumania for the purpose of military operations against Russia (see *Daily Telegraph*, September 13th, 1921). If these operations were to turn out successfully for the capitalists, the Russian workers might starve even to the extent that happens in India, but the Jackal Press would not then be able to find room to report so ordinary an occurrence.

It is another lesson for the working class, showing that only when they control the means of life will they be able to make provision against famines or floods. As soon as they learn the lesson they will set to work to establish that ownership by inaugurating Socialism.

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proscribed. Of the Blanquists he writes as follows:

The Blanquists fared no better. Brought up in the school of conspiracy, held together by the rigid discipline essential to it, they started from the conception that a comparatively small number of resolute, well-organised men would be able not only to grasp the helm of State at a favourable moment, but also, through the display of great energy and reckless daring, to hold it as long as required, that is, until they had succeeded in carrying the masses of the people into the revolutionary current and ranging them round the small leading band. To accomplish this, what was necessary, above all else, was the most stringent, dictatorial centralisation of all powers in the hands of the new revolutionary government. And what did the Commune do, which in the majority consisted of these very Blanquists? In all its proclamations to the French people in the provinces it called upon them for a free federation of all French communes with Paris for a national organisation, which, for the first time, was to be the real creation of the nation. The army, the political police, the bureaucracy, all those agencies of oppression in a centralised government; which Napoleon had created in 1798, and which since then every new government had gladly used and kept up as ready weapons against its enemies, were to be abolished everywhere, as they had been abolished in Paris.—Page 16.

Lenin repeatedly cries out against the charge of "Blanquism" levelled at his group, and asserts "We are not Blanquists," yet it is obvious that Engels' description of the French Blanquists exactly fits the Bolsheviks.

We have previously quoted Zinoviev's statement that the Russian Communist Party controls the State machine from top to bottom, though the membership of this Party was only a little over 600,000 in April, 1920, some of whom were excluded from voting. Taking Zinoviev's statement with that of Bucharin, quoted above, what is the difference between the Russian party and the Blanquists as defined by Engels? Only this. The Bolsheviks are Blanquists in practice, whilst the Blanquists acted directly opposite to the Blanquist idea.

Now let us hear what Lissagaray, the historian of the Commune, has to say.

Of the Central Committee, the committee appointed by the National Guard prior to the promulgation of the Commune, he writes as follows:

Their farewell address was worthy of their advent: "Do not forget that the men who will serve you best are those whom you will choose from amongst yourselves, living your life, suffering the same ills. Beware of the ambitious as well as the upstarts. Beware also of mere talkers. Shun those whom fortune has favoured, for only too

rarely is he who possesses fortune prone to look upon the workingman as a brother. Give your preference to those who do not solicit your suffrages. True merit is modest, and it is for the workingmen to know those who are worthy, not for these to present themselves."

They could indeed "come down the steps of the Hotel de Ville head erect," these obscure men who had safely anchored the revolution of the 18th March. Named only to organise the National Guard, thrown at the head of a revolution without precedent and without guides, they had been able to resist the impatient, quell the riot, re-establish the public services, victual Paris, baffle intrigues, take advantage of all blunders of Versailles and of the Mayors, and, harassed on all sides, every moment in danger of civil war, know how to negotiate, to act at the right time and in the right place. They had embodied the tendency of the movement, limited their program to communal revindications, and conducted the entire population to the ballot-box.—Page 124.

The Central Committee referred to by Lissagaray was composed of delegates appointed by the National Guard. The latter body comprised the able-bodied citizens of Paris after the departure of the Versailles. The delegates in question were none of them appointed as members of any particular group or party; all were, as Lissagaray repeatedly emphasises, unknown, obscure men, who voluntarily relinquished the power they held as soon as they had arranged for, and carried through, the elections of the delegates to the Commune itself.

The Bolshevik movement is the attempt at dictatorship on the part of a group within the Russian Communist Party. The Paris Commune, on the contrary, was no dictatorship of a party or group, but an endeavour to realise the participation of the whole of the people democratically in the administration of social affairs.

Much has been written by the Bolsheviks and their supporters around the question of freedom of the Press; volumes of ridicule and abuse have been poured upon the heads of those unfortunates who opposed the suppression of the bourgeois press, or who suggested that there was no point in gagging the press if the Russian masses were sufficiently advanced to understand the position. It must be borne in mind that the Bolsheviks make great capital out of the alleged overwhelming support they received from the workers, soldiers and peasants.

What did the Communards do (with no precedent to assist them) in this connection when faced by a position similar to that

facing the Bolsheviks? Let us hear Lissagaray again:

Sunday the 26th (March, 1871) was a day of joy and sunshine. Paris breathed again, happy, like one just escaped from death or great peril. At Versailles the streets looked gloomy, gendarmes occupied the station, brutally demanded passports, confiscated all the journals of Paris, and at the slightest expression of sympathy for the town arrested you. At Paris everybody could enter freely. The streets swarmed with people, the cafes were noisy; the same lad cried out the Paris Journal and the Commune; the attacks against the Hotel de Ville, the protestations of a few malcontents, were posted on the walls by the side of the placards of the Central Committee. The people were without anger because without fear. The voting paper had replaced the Chassepot.—Page 172.

From the above it will be seen that the statements of the Bourgeois were circulated as freely and openly as the statements of the Communards—exactly the opposite of the procedure in Russia. The Bolsheviks suppressed antagonistic journals; put into operation a "Committee of Public Safety" against their adversaries; demolished the Assembly that had been one of their watchwords; put into operation labour and military conscription; and, in general, ruled with a mailed fist.

The Bolsheviks claim that the working class must break up the capitalist state machine as a preliminary step to the social revolution. On this question they make excessive use of Marx's phrase, from the "Civil War in France," the "working class cannot simply seize the available ready machinery of the State and set it going for its own ends." We have already dealt with this point, but a little further examination of it will be useful, particularly as Lenin employs several pages of his "The State and Revolution" to force an unwarrantable inference from Marx's words.

In the first place, what constitutes a social revolution? A social revolution goes through three phases: First the educational and agitational phase; then the conquest of power; and finally the reorganisation of society to meet the requirements of the class just arisen to power.

Marx analysed the Commune and showed that *once in power* (that is to say, having reached the second phase) the Communards provided an illustration of the methods to be adopted by the workers to accomplish the revolution in conditions; that stopping at the mere *holding* "of the ready-made State machinery" would not solve their

difficulties; but he nowhere suggests that the workers should abstain from, in the first instance, obtaining control of this machinery. Engels makes the matter quite clear when he says, in the Introduction to the "Civil War in France" (already quoted):

From the very outset the Commune had to recognise that the working-class, *having once attained supremacy in the State*, could not work with the old machinery of government. (Italics ours.)—Page 17.

It is necessary to use the evidence of the Commune very carefully in this connection, because at the time a peculiar position had arisen. The French Bourgeoisie had already divested themselves of the greater part of their power by their intrigues and manipulations with Germany. In fact, in order to fight the Commune they had to beg of Bismarck the release of the French soldiers interned in Germany. The general in charge of the operations against the Commune was the same MacMahon who had "sold out" at Sedan.

The break-up of the capitalist State machinery may be a preliminary step to the revolution in social conditions, but it certainly is not a preliminary step to the conquest of power. The Bolsheviks, when blinding themselves with "the break up of the State machinery" infer that this machinery must be "smashed" before power can be obtained (it is true they frequently contradict themselves, as we have shown elsewhere), hence their contention that strikes and street insurrections are the main methods of action. For example, in the *Socialist Review* for July, 1920, there appears a translation of an official document entitled "Parliamentarism and the Struggle for the Soviets." The following paragraph from this document makes clear the Bolshevik attitude:

What we would particularly emphasise is the following: *The real solution of the question is to be found, under all circumstances, outside Parliament, in the street.* That strikes and insurrections are the only methods of resolute war between Capital and Labour is now clear. Therefore, the chief efforts of comrades should be directed to the work of the mobilisation of the masses, the establishment of the Party, the development of its own groups in industry and their control over it, the organisation of Soviets during the course of the struggle, the leading of mass action, agitation for the revolution among the masses—all that in the first line; Parliamentary action and participation in election campaigns only as one expedient in this work—nothing more. (Italics ours.)—Page 272.

The above document is signed "G. Zinoviev, President of the Executive Com-

mittee of the Communist International," and dated September 1st, 1919. It must be remembered that Lenin is a leading member of the E.C. of the Communist International.

Many further illustrations could be given, but the above is sufficient to indicate what a subordinate position is given to parliamentary action by the Bolsheviks.

To those who refuse to be carried away by mere verbiage, it must be obvious that to attempt to smash the political machinery, without first getting hold of it, is the best way for the workers to get their heads smashed. If they first get hold of the political machinery (which they can do when the majority so wish) they can then, as Engels puts it, lop off its worst features at once. Engels' statement, anent the State, made in 1891, is as follows:

But in reality the State is nothing else than a machine for the oppression of one class by another class, and that no less so in the democratic republic than under the monarchy. *At the very best it is an inheritance of evil bound to be transmitted to the proletariat when it has become victorious in its struggle for class supremacy, and the worst features of which it will have to lop off at once, as the Commune did, until a new race, grown up under new, free social conditions, will be in a position to shake off from itself this state rubbish in its entirety.*—Page 20. Introd. to German ed. "Civil War in France." (Italics ours.)

The above rather brief comparison of the Paris Commune with the Bolshevik movement will convey an idea of the nature of the differences between them.

Before concluding our sketch of the Russian movement there is another point to which we wish to draw attention.

Lenin and other Bolshevik writers frequently contend that they did not base their hopes of success upon an *early* uprising of the international working class. If we examine their proclamations and the reports of their speeches, however, we find that the contrary is true. The following quotations should set any doubts upon this point at rest:

If in awaiting the *imminent* proletarian flood in Europe, Russia should be forced to conclude peace with the present-day Governments of the Central Powers, it would be a provisional, temporary, and transitory peace, with the revision of which the European Revolution will have to concern itself in the first instance. *Our whole policy is built upon the expectation of this revolution.* (Italics ours.)—Page 160. From "What is a Peace Programme," by L. Trotsky. Printed in "International Conciliation" (New York, No. 149, April, 1920.

In the same journal from which the above extract is taken there appears a May 1st Appeal from the Communist International "to the Toilers of the Whole World," which is signed by the "Executive Committee of the Communist International," and concludes as follows:

In 1919 was born the great Communist International.

In 1920 will be born the great International Soviet Republic.—Page 181.

It must be again pointed out that Lenin is a leading member of the Executive that sent out the above appeal, and Zinoviev is the secretary.

In different contributions, Trotzky and others go into ecstasies over the alleged spreading of the Soviet Movement throughout the world. Trotzky, in particular, states (*Pravda*, April 23rd, 1919):

At the present moment one awaits from day to day the victory of the Soviet Republic in Austria and in Germany.

We are afraid the days are rather long ones, and Trotzky relies too much on wishes and too little on exact information.

However, time will bring the solution to Russian doubts and difficulties, as it has brought the solution to the problems of the past.

At the present moment nature is playing a tragic part in the business. In ordinary circumstances a drought in Russia is a very serious matter owing to the primitive agricultural methods and the failure of the peasants as a class to make provision for the future. At the present juncture, when a world-wide drought of a particularly severe character has been combined with circumstances due to Bolshevik dictatorship, the results are greatly exasperated and presage disaster to the Bolshevik regime.

This fact, however, is no excuse for jubilation on the part of Bolshevik opponents, nor is the shedding of crocodile tears over the starving peasantry helpful. It should, however, induce the workers—and particularly the self-styled "revolutionists"—of the brass band variety—to study the *whole* of the conditions, so far as information is available, that have given rise to the present state of affairs. By such action they will enlarge their knowledge of principles and tactics, and be capable of taking an *understanding* part in the struggle for international working class emancipation.

One lesson above all Russia drives home: No backward nation can leap the inter-

mediate stages of development and jump ahead of the vanguard. One nation learns from another, and progress is, on the average, parallel in the advanced capitalist countries.

The laws of historical development, which work with an iron-like consistency, are defeating the Bolsheviks more conclusively than any capitalist army.

GILMAC.

### A SENTIMENTALIST IN THE ANTIPODES.

The Marxist has many kinds of critics. Some endeavour to refute his "statement of facts," others admit the facts, but quarrel with the Marxists' generalisations therefrom. A third variety centre their attack upon what they are pleased to call the Marxists' "dogmatic, intolerant, and narrow" attitude of mind. Frequently these anti-Marxists pay lip-service to the Marxian theories of society, and call themselves "Socialists." Such an individual is M. Sawtell, who contributes an article—"Greater than Marx"—to the "Socialist" (Australia, 17/6/'21).

"Although Marx and the Marxists are right in much of their economic and historical data," he tells us, "they are generally wrong in their philosophy and attitude." As he gives no evidence in the article before us to show that the Marxian philosophy is unsound, we can waive a discussion on this point and deal with his criticism of the Marxists' "attitude." His attack, however, is vague and confused. He makes no definite and concrete accusations against the Marxists, but contents himself with throwing out insinuations and making rhetorical assertions.

He says, "... we must leave this intellectual parasitism of sucking other men's minds by merely memorising their writings." "It is fatal to the scholar and the Socialist to be continually memorising other men's ideas. Nothing vitiates a movement so much as this slavish acceptance of intellectual authority or repressed on being asked, 'Dare we to refute Marx?' " "Let us be ourselves." "Let us be greater than Marx."

We have not yet met the Marxist who has "memorised" the writings of Marx, but we would very much like to. One may exist, of course, but even so it is folly

to take that individual as typical of Marxists in general, for they, poor fellows, have neither the capacity, nor the time, nor the desire to perform such a remarkable mental feat.

As for memorising Marx's ideas (if by this is meant his main principles and theories), it is difficult to see how a person can understand theories at all, let alone accept or reject them, without committing them to memory. Memory is one of the most important faculties of the mind, without which all reasoning and intelligent action becomes impossible. Of course, anyone can see that, were it possible for anyone to be "continually memorising," it would be "fatal" in a very literal sense, whether they were "scholar," "Socialist," or even ordinary human being. Total lack of sleep is a very unhealthy thing.

As a matter of fact, the Socialist memorises the main principles of Marxism (and, for that matter, Manchesterism and Toryism) during the process of understanding them. He keeps vivid and renders more detailed these "memories" by reading, discussion, and observation, and uses them as a means of further understanding and as a guide to thought and action.

Some Marxists, of course, may, and do, exaggerate the personal importance of Marx as an authority owing to their admiration for his genius—they are not perfect, they are human beings, not automatic logic machines—but it is quite untrue to suggest that they as a body "slavishly" accept his intellectual authority.

Marx and Engels made wrong judgments, like other people. In 1848 and even later they under-estimated very considerably the longevity of Capitalism. Engels, especially in his later years, had an exaggerated idea of the strength and soundness of the Second International, and particularly of the German S.D.P.

Mr. Sawtell has no use for slavish Marxists, intellectual parasites, and continual memorisers. He tells us in the most definite terms the type of individuals of which a movement *ought* to consist. "The greatest and most useful people are not those who strive and struggle, or who waste time and energy denouncing those who do not agree with them; but rather those who serenely and calmly cast themselves upon the great unseen laws of Nature, for peace and power." What these wonderful people who neither strive nor

struggle nor propagate their opinions, but merely cast themselves (etc., etc.), are "most useful" for, he does not tell us, nor does he go into any detail about the "great unseen" laws upon which the "casting" is performed, so that criticism of this remarkable passage is somewhat difficult.

More definitely he tells us that "any self-reliant individual is worth a whole movement of imitators." It seems to us rather difficult to reconcile the "self-reliants" with the "anti-strife, serene-casters," but we'll let that pass.

All men are "self-reliant"; all men are "imitators." There is no antagonism. There are extreme types, of course, but in no case is one faculty developed to the exclusion of the other. As a matter of fact, it is because man is imitative that he can become self-reliant. Imitation, as an elementary acquaintance with social psychology would show, is one of the fundamental bases of human society. All of which shows the un-wisdom of taking copy-book headings as axioms from which to theorise.

Part of Mr. Sawtell's antipathy to Marxians apparently arises out of his geographical situation, for he tells us: "We have every hope that Australia will be a cradle of the new civilisation. There is no need for us to slavishly follow the examples of the old world." "Let us, in a new land, inspire a new attitude; let us be creators, not imitators."

As neither the land, nor the people, nor the form of Society, nor its traditions are NEW, Mr. Sawtell's sentimental appeal has little groundwork in facts. Which shows the foolishness of building a theoretical edifice (or even a one column article) upon idiotic catch phrases. R. W. H.

## "REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL ACTION."

### COMMUNIST BRAND.

In the leading article in the September SOCIALIST STANDARD the Communist Party's Caerphilly Election Address was quoted from as follows:

Pledged as it is to Political Action the Communist Party is enabled by this opportunity to demonstrate just how far and in what way Revolutionary Political Action differs from the creeping thing the worker has learned to know and to hate as Parliamentarism.

The article went on to say: "If the election has provided the Communist Party with an opportunity to explain the meaning of Revolutionary Political Action, then that Party has certainly failed to take advantage of this opportunity."

If the Communist Party failed on this occasion to make clear what they mean by revolutionary political action, there have been other occasions when they have taken the opportunity. On the Poplar Board of Guardians sit two members of the Communist Party, A. A. Watts and Edgar Lansbury. On June 22nd, at a Board meeting of the Poplar Guardians, the General Purposes Committee recommended a list of reductions in wages of men employed by the Board, building labourers, women sewing machinists, and bakers. What did our two exponents of "revolutionary political action" do? They voted for the reductions!

It was only when the following recommendation was made, viz., "That our action be approved and confirmed and that the wages of the above-mentioned officers be further reduced by 2s. 6d. per week each for every fall of 10 points in the cost of living under figures below 120," that Edgar Lansbury said, "I'm not opposing the reductions. We've already agreed to it, but I don't like us pledging ourselves to do it in the future." (Quoted by "Workers' Dreadnought," 2/7/21.)

Who have been louder in their denunciation of this principle of the cost of living basis of wages, that the workers should for ever be tied to one bare level of subsistence, than the Communist Party? Yet here we have two of its members lending it their support.

In the "Industrial Notes" in the "Communist" (28/5/21) occurred the following passages:

Will somebody explain what has happened to the committees set up by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress to consider joint action against wage reductions.

One explanation offered is that the members of the sub-committees have been so busy negotiating reductions for their own members that they have had no time to meet.

Agreements, even, are being broken and strikes are resulting. Aggression by the boss class is seen on every hand.

Clearly a case of the "pot calling the kettle black." Even Councillor Charlie Sumner, not a revolutionary Communist, but just a Trade Unionist who believes in

"a fair day's wage for a fair day's work," said, "Yes, but d'you see, the baking trade has always been a terribly sweated trade, and it isn't to say that we should join in just because everyone else is coming down on them." The same is true, of course, of women sewing machinists. Even this failed to move our "revolutionaries"; Sumner, as a matter of fact, voted for the reductions.

A. A. Watts was himself, as Chairman of the Sub-Committee, the signatory to a recommendation to reduce relief to the poor (excepting widows and aged persons) by 10 per cent. The Communist Party's "revolutionary" Caerphilly Election Address demanded "for the unemployed work or maintenance at full Trade Union rates." The case of Poplar illustrates how the Communist Party deals with the unemployed when it has the power. Evidently there is little to choose between the Communist Party and those ancient adepts in the art of "piecrust" promising, the Liberal and Tory Parties.

And have Watts and E. Lansbury been expelled from the Communist Party for violating their "principles"? Not a bit of it. Only Miss Sylvia Pankhurst has been expelled for not handing the paper, which published the information, over to the control of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, of which Watts is a member.

Another occasion is taken advantage of by the Communist Party to show what they mean by revolutionary political action. In the "Communist" (17/9/21), under "Notes of the Week," occurs the following:

We, as Communists, welcome Poplar's action for two reasons. The first is that work or maintenance at full trade union rates is a demand which the Communist Party has always pressed, for the revolutionary reason that capitalism can neither refuse it with dignity nor concede it without suicide. Secondly, and more importantly, because the Poplar Council has carried out the advice of the Third International: *To capture the machinery of bourgeois administration and use it for revolutionary ends.* (Communist's italics.)

In regard to the first reason, imagine, if you can, capital committing suicide to save its dignity. The idea is too ridiculous to need serious refutation. The Communist Party has been in existence over a year now, and so far capital has refused this demand, which the Communist Party

"has always pressed," and risked its dignity. As for committing suicide—

And what is the revolutionary end that the Labour Party has captured the "machinery of bourgeois administration" to effect? The Poplar Borough Council has refused to levy the precepts of the L.C.C. and other outside authorities as a means to bringing about the equalisation of rates. I take it then, that if this revolutionary end is achieved, the system of society advocated by the Communist Party and called by them "Communism," will have been inaugurated? Let us see.

Prior to the Rent Restrictions Act the effect on the working-class of equalisation of rates would have been nil. There was an excess of supply of houses over demand and rents were competitive. Higher rates in one borough had to be compensated by lower rents, so that the total amount paid for a house was the same all round for the same class of house. Cases have been cited in the SOCIALIST STANDARD where rent has even fallen while the rates have been rising. But under the Rent Act the amount of rates in excess of the rate levied in 1914 is added directly to the rent allowed by the Act. This fact gives credence to the idea that the working-class is affected by high or low rates. But what would naturally take place if rates were reduced in working-class boroughs as a consequence of equalisation? Wages, especially in the state the labour market is at present, would almost immediately reflect the reduction.

But, apart from the benefit the capitalists who exploit the workers in London would derive as a consequence of the reduction in the latter's cost of living, who would really benefit by the change? The big factory owners and other Capitalists who have premises in Poplar and other boroughs whose rates would be reduced. And it would be pertinent to ask who is paying for the floods of literature, some of which is sent to voters in stamped envelopes, with which Poplar is being deluged? No working-class organisation dependent on the pence of its members and sympathisers could afford it at the best of times. The whole thing, so far as the working-class is concerned, is simply summed up: it is yet another red herring serving the purpose of diverting them from their real interests and from what should be their only goal, Socialism.

T. D.

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Matthew-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Sec., 142 Bulwer-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigdon-rd. Schools, opposite Hackney Downs Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Weds., Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., E. Scotcher, 48 Tintern-st., Hanley, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Sec., J. Lloyd 2 Chapel-st., Chester-rd., Hulme, Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8, at Exmouth-st. Schools (L.C.C.), Hampstead-rd., N.W. Communications to W. F. Tickner, 51 High-rd., Willesden-green, N.W.10.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 6 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Sec., 24 Worslade-rd., Tooting, S.W.17. Branch meets Fridays at Parochial Hall, Church-lane, Tooting, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Sec., 11 Carlton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.** Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mayes-rd., N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Edmonton, Silver Street, 11.30 a.m.  
Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Stratford, Vicarage-lane, 7.30 p.m.  
Tooting Broadway, Garrett-lane, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3.30 p.m.  
Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 7.30 p.m.

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Tuesdays:**

Tooting, Church-lane, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:**

Dalston, Queen's-road, 8.30 p.m.  
Wimbledon Broadway, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junction Clyde-road and Phillip-lane, 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Undine-street, 8 p.m.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## As it was not in the beginning, it will not always be.

In human history, just as in all other directions, the principle of change operates. Social systems arise, grow, and decay, just as animals and plants do, the new system being a growth out of the older system.

A glance along the path the human race has traversed in its development brings to light the fact that there have arisen at different times certain fundamentally different social systems, and in each epoch the people of the period have had their own particular outlook on life; as the epochs have been fundamentally different, so have the ideas of the times.

Until the latter half of the last century the early history of mankind was, comparatively speaking, something of a mystery. There was no guide or key to assist investigators; no scientific theory to bring order out of the apparent chaos and render fruitful and intelligible in this field the work of ethnologists and archaeologists; all was shrouded in darkness.

To the late Lewis Henry Morgan, the American ethnologist, we are indebted for the clearing away of the clouds that obscured man's early social history. His laborious, careful, and lengthy investigations have not only provided us with a wealth of material, but have also given us the key to the progressive movement of man from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilisation. Morgan analysed and explained the development of the Gens (the blood relationships and all that this signified) and the part it played in primitive society.

Since Morgan published the results of his investigations, other workers in the same field have followed the paths he

pointed out, so that we now have ample material to enable us to *understand* primitive society.

In view of the attempt on the part of Capitalist professors to spread the false idea that Capitalism, in one form or another, has always existed, the work of Morgan is especially valuable to the Socialist movement. He has provided us with indisputable proof of the existence in the past of communities practising communal ownership; and he has shown that the introduction of private property broke up the old societies founded upon kinship and started society off on a new career founded upon private property—the territorial tie. The re-introduction of communism—the aim of the Socialist—will write *finis* to the social systems based upon property, and bring society to a new communism—but communism upon a vastly higher scale; communism with the advantages that will accrue from all the discoveries and accumulated means of wealth-production obtained by the human race at such a cost of blood and tears and misery to the wealth producers since society passed out of primitive communism into early civilisation.

If a broad glance be taken at history, it will be found that four distinct forms of society have existed at successive periods in social development, *i.e.*, the Primitive, the Antique, the Feudal, and the Capitalistic. In each of these social systems the method of obtaining the means to satisfy social needs, or, to put the matter more simply, the way in which wealth was produced, differed. In the Primitive commune all the able-bodied members took their allotted

part in obtaining what was required to satisfy the needs of the community, and as all shared the work, so they also shared the fruit of their work. In the Antique system, which flourished during the palmy days of Greece and Rome, the wealth of society was obtained by means of the work of chattel slaves, and the wealth produced flowed into the hands of Greek and Roman proprietors. Under Feudalism the bond slave was the beast of burden, and the feudal proprietor the appropriator of the wealth obtained. In our day, the day of fully-fledged Capitalism, the wage-slave does the toiling and moiling in the obtaining of the means of social existence, whilst all the wealth produced is owned by the Capitalist proprietor.

So far, then, each social system had a different economic foundation—its own peculiar method of satisfying its needs. But each system has not been what we may call "self-developed"; that is to say, they have not grown from separate isolated seeds. Each has grown out of the preceding system. The question that immediately confronts us, then, is: What has been the dynamic factor of the matter? What has caused one to be transformed into the other? How, for example, came society to forsake its communistic basis for a private property basis?

In the first place, Karl Marx subjected this point to a thorough analysis and elucidated the cause of social change. But, independently of Marx, Morgan also solved the problem, and his investigations shed light on the matter.

Morgan divided early social development into two main periods—Savagery and Barbarism; and these periods he split up into six sub-periods—lower, middle, and upper stages of Savagery, and lower, middle, and upper stages of Barbarism. The transition from one sub-period to another is marked by the discovery of a new means to obtain from nature a better subsistence. For example, the transition from the earliest form of social existence to the middle stage of Savagery was marked by the discovery of fire; the transition to the upper stage of Savagery was accomplished by the invention of bows and arrows; the discovery of pottery introduced the lower stage of Barbarism; the cultivation of food plants and the domestication of animals introduced the middle stage of Barbarism; the melting of

iron ore the upper stage of Barbarism; and the invention of letter script and its utilisation for writing records brought mankind to the threshold of Civilisation.

Each of the different discoveries mentioned brought mankind into better harmony with natural forces; enabled him to take greater advantage of the latter to the end that he obtained a better subsistence. But the increase in the means of production, the obtaining of a better and easier subsistence, led to the production of a surplus over and above what the community immediately required, and this in turn led to a struggle for the ownership of the surplus. Here we have the embryonic class struggle, the germ of future class struggles and social systems. Society had developed to the point where all need not be workers, owing to the fruitfulness of the wealth-producing appliances; hence the struggle as to who should own and who should work these appliances; the establishment of a class of owners (the introduction of private property); and the struggle between the owning and producing classes, which, as fresh method of obtaining wealth were discovered, gave birth to new social systems with new social classes.

The following quotations from Morgan's chief work, "Ancient Society," on the introduction of private property, are an example of his insight and grasp of the matter:

"When field agriculture had demonstrated that the whole surface of the earth could be made the subject of property owned by individuals in severalty, and it was found that the head of the family became the natural centre of accumulation, the new property career of mankind was inaugurated. It was fully done before the later period of barbarism. A little reflection must convince anyone of the powerful influence property would now begin to exercise upon the human mind, and of the great awakening of new elements of character it was calculated to produce. Evidence appears, from many sources, that the feeble impulse aroused in the savage mind had now become a tremendous passion in the splendid barbarian of the heroic age. Neither archaic nor later usages could maintain themselves in such an advanced condition. The time had now arrived when monogamy, having assured the paternity of children, would assert and maintain their exclusive right to inherit the property of their deceased father."—pp. 553-554.

"During the Later Period of Barbarism a new element, that of aristocracy, had a marked development. The individuality of persons, and the increase of wealth now possessed by individuals in masses, were laying the foundation of personal influence. Slavery, also, by permanently degrad-

ing a portion of the people, tended to establish contrasts of condition unknown in the previous ethnical periods. This, with property and official position, gradually developed the sentiment of aristocracy, which has so deeply penetrated modern society, and antagonised the democratical principles created and fostered by the gentes. It soon disturbed the balance of society by introducing unequal privileges, and degrees of respect for individuals among people of the same nationality, and these became the source of discord and strife."—Page 560.

"Since the advent of civilization, the outgrowth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding, and its management so intelligent in the interests of its owners, that it has become, on the part of the people, an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation. The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relations of the state to the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests, and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relations. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilization began is but a fragment of the past duration of man's existence, and but a fragment of the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes."—pp. 561-562.

The above quotations are an indication of the remarkable insight and thorough grasp of his material Morgan had. Perhaps it will be an incentive to the reader to get a closer acquaintance with Morgan's writings. In particular, a study of "Ancient Society" would reward well the effort expended.

From the foregoing it can be seen that each social system has had at the back of it an older one, right away back to the time when our ancestors forsook their arborial abodes for the solid ground. Just as each social system has given birth to or foreshadowed a later system, so Capitalism at the high tide of its development foreshadows another system in which the evils that flow from the economic foundations of Capitalism will cease to exist; economic insecurity will be as remote as the marvellous development of science can make it; no

longer will those toiling myriads be bowed down with the weight of economic troubles, and the miseries we know to-day will disappear as snow before the sun.

GILMAC.

### JOTTINGS.

On the economic field there is constant conflict between the masters and the workers, each in turn fighting to reduce and increase this common standard of subsistence. If, therefore, a section of the master class are successful in shifting the burden of taxation imposed upon them by Parliament, for the purposes before mentioned, it amounts to the fact that by so doing they have succeeded in reserving for their sectional interest a larger proportion of the surplus value, which they and their class as a whole filch from the workers.

The activities of Lansbury and Co., therefore, in the interests of the local industrial capitalists and landlords (our George is one of 'em), is another illustration of the political profiteering of this "Come to Jesus" humbug. There are others besides him, and the Communist Party of Great Britain do not intend to be caught napping by anyone after "Stunt Championships." Listen to what they have to say on the issue:

"Poplar Borough Council is in gaol. It has done more in one week for the workers than all the other Labour Councils have done in all their little lives." . . . "The assumption of everyone was that a Labour Council in Poplar would be good and carry out the 'precept' of the L.C.C.—levy, as usual, money, that must be wrung, at any rate immediately, from the starving to save the pockets of the wealthy West Enders."

—"The Communist," 17th Sept., 1921. The Communist Party of Great Britain, affiliated to the Third International, claiming to base its actions on the Marxian doctrines! Phew! Revolutionary substitutes.

o o o

"America is the home of the free," so they say. We happen to know, however, that the workers in that country, faced with a capitalist system of production, are subject to similar evils that afflict the workers everywhere that system obtains. They do things on a much "higher" scale in America, however. For instance, we

read the following from the "Daily News," 3rd Sept., 1921:—

"According to latest advices from Mingo, the recalcitrant miners of West Virginia are to be attacked forthwith by American aviators with tear bombs and gas bombs . . . merely a very modern form of police protection. It is probably a tip taken from a recent German book which showed how effectively aeroplanes could be employed in times of peace for dispersing unauthorised assemblies. If the American bomb droppers really get going they will be able to show the Black and Tans a thing or two."

Overlooking the sardonic suggestion to the Government for a speedy means of settling the Irish question, contained in the last sentence of the above, we did not think that the American masters would devise such an ingenious way of bringing their slaves—with tears in their eyes—to their proper senses. But the Yankee worker will tell you—chewing gum the time—that "he won the war" and that "America is God's own country—believe me." But he forgets to add "for the American Capitalist."

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"The day may be far distant when the actual political arrangements of the world will realise the highest ideal of which our social instincts are capable; but every life honestly spent in the faithful service of the Commonwealth, every hour devoted to the earnest study of the public good, brings that day more surely within our reach."

—"History of Politics," Ed. Jenks, M.A.

The object of the Socialist Party is the establishment of Socialism, a system of society wherein the means of production will be owned and controlled by the producers, the Working Class. It is because these means of production are privately owned by the Capitalist Class to-day that millions of the workers throughout the world are in need of food, clothing, and shelter. Wealth is socially produced; it is the result of the co-operation of effort of the Working Class of the world applied to natural resources. But this wealth and the means for producing it are privately owned. It is this antagonism which the Socialist Party is out to abolish. Under the Socialist system harmony will take the place of the existing chaos, because there will be social production side by side with social owner-

ship. This change in the social order is the revolutionary ideal of the Socialist. All else is illusion.

Workers, mark well the words contained in the above quotation, and fit yourselves for the mission which historical development demands—that you shall, by the power of your own individual and collective effort of muscle and brain, some day triumphantly achieve. When you will, who shall say you nay?

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"Compromise is virtual death. It is the pact between cowardice and comfort, under the title of expediency."—George Meredith.

Great brains think alike, so it is said. Note the hostility clause in the Declaration of Principles at the back hereof, and in conjunction therewith, write for a copy of our Manifesto, which explains our attitude of hostility towards all other parties. Price 3d., post free 3½d.

o o o

#### "CALMLY STRIVING."

"A sunny view of world and life  
As balm for brain and heart,  
It is with health and beauty rife,  
With noblest works of art.  
But do not for a moment think  
That it is captured in a wink.  
The golden harvest does not grow  
Unless the early tempests blow.  
And only bitter woe and strain  
Will bring bright and lofty wisdom gain."

—Fr. von Sallet.

The present social structure was not conceived by any one man or number of supermen. It is the result of slow, steady evolutionary processes. So with the new order—the Socialist society of free men and women—it will come when the time is ripe, when the productive forces are developed to the point when a change will be inevitable. Our message to the workers is: Be prepared for that time to welcome the birth of the new social order; to herald in the Co-operative Commonwealth. As the poet puts it: "What is life?"

'Tis not to walk about and draw fresh air  
From time to time and gaze upon the sun.  
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone  
Life grows insipid and has lost its relish."

To those who yawn in this black hell of Capitalism, arouse yourselves to the work of Working Class emancipation.

Owing to the failure of the Working Class to understand their position in society, they easily become the victims of any Labour shark desirous of fattening on their ignorance. At the present time, millions of workers unemployed or on short time are demonstrating in almost every city and town, demanding work or maintenance. Lacking knowledge, they are easily led into difficulties and conflicts with the Police. Quite recently in Liverpool the unemployed workers demonstrated in great numbers, and one of their number shouted, "Raid the Art Gallery."

Whatever could be obtained by capturing that object passes our comprehension.

The building was immediately rushed and occupied by the unemployed, but they were driven out by the Police with drawn batons, with the result that much damage to heads was done and many unemployed were arrested. We have often pointed out that so long as the workers fail to make a serious study of the Socialist proposition, that the private ownership of the means of life is alone the cause of unemployment and all its concomitant evils, the workers will, sheep-like, follow any politician or would-be Labour leader to their own destruction and disillusionment.

*Apropos* of the workers, we read the following in the *Evening News* (27/10/21):

"An extraordinary example of the way sheep will follow their leader, even to destruction, occurred here to-day (Yarmouth), when one of a flock of pedigree black-faced ewes attempted to eat some leaves which covered a disused well. The animal fell through the leaves and disappeared down the well. Other sheep immediately followed until 17 had leapt in. All were killed or suffocated before help arrived."

Further comment would simply spoil it.

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It is becoming almost impossible now to pick up any of the daily papers without reading in their columns terribly distressing stories of privation, starvation, suicide, or murder consequent upon the awful struggle for existence of the Working Class. If man's command over Nature had not reached the point it has, where, with the aid of wonderful machinery, he is able to produce wealth in abundance, such starvation and want in our midst to-day would be understandable. Millions to-day are idle, cannot obtain permission to manipulate the machinery of wealth production, and, with the raw material provided by Nature,

fashion into the finished products we need for food, clothing and shelter. And yet we can read of the following in the so-called Twentieth Century of Enlightenment

#### "CRYING FOR BREAD."

"It is one of these awful cases of dire distress and starvation," said Detective-inspector Hall, in the Thames Police-Court.

Emma Coughlin, aged 41, of Willis Street, Poplar, was remanded on a charge of attempting to murder her three children and commit suicide by means of coal gas.

When arrested she said: "I put some money in the gas and locked the bedroom door. I only did it to frighten him (evidently meaning her husband). I do not know why I did it."

"The children are continually crying for bread, and I do not know where to get the money. . . . I sold some furniture and I have pawned nearly everything. I have no clothes for my bed. I did not know what to do."

*Evening News*, 1/10/21.

Bread, like every other form of wealth, can only be produced by applying human energy to Nature's resources.

The land, all in it and upon it—the workshops, factories and machinery, the mills, mines, and railroads, all the necessary tools and implements for producing and distributing wealth—are owned and controlled by a comparatively few people in society. The vast majority of the human race, being divorced from the means of life, obtain permission from the owners to produce wealth for the latter, with a view to profit, and in return receive a wage, just a portion of the total value produced.

When a profit is no longer forthcoming, and, incidentally, when the markets of the world are glutted with the good things of life, the workers in thousands remain idle and go without just at the time they should be enjoying the fruits of their energy. Such cases as above could never disgrace a system of society where the means of life were the common property of all, inasmuch as when the whole of those who are physically and mentally fit, capable of contributing their quota of energy in association with their fellows the world wide, would, when the wealth is produced, socially own, control, and enjoy the results of their social labour.

o o o

That vile, sickly sentiment, of which only the Press of the Capitalist Class is capable, is once more being indulged in by the daily papers, concerning the coming anniversary of the signing of the Armistice.

Once more they are urging that November 11th should be a day of "National Observance" as paying a tribute to the "Heroic Dead."

If our masters were able to show and to prove that those who survived the terrible struggle in France and Flanders were passing through those "fields of waving corn" promised so often, which have never materialised, something might be said for the tribute they wish us to pay.

Right from when the last cannon and machine-gun spluttered forth its deadly missile, until the present time, the Working Class, including the ex-Service men, have faced a far worse struggle for existence than ever known before.

Since the last anniversary, the workers, irrespective of whether they had been in the armed forces or munition factories, fighting and slaving to maintain the "glorious prestige of the British Empire," have suffered a greatly reduced standard of subsistence as a result of the reductions in wages forced upon them by the Capitalist Class.

Far more common it is to-day to see the "brave lads" begging support in the streets, playing barrel-organs and generally trying to appeal to the generosity of our benevolent Ruling Class! Thousands are seeking employment, many of whom are physically wrecked on account of their experiences in the trenches. Their chance of employment is almost hopeless, and doubtless they will find their way to the heroes' home—the workhouse, or a premature grave, the victims of starvation.

The hypocritical Ruling Class will always pay tributes in words, but not in deeds. Those workers who perished fighting the battles of our masters to satisfy the latter's insatiable greed for profits, we know only too well, did so under a conception of patriotism drilled into them when young and fostered since.

Were it not for the fact that they have no understanding of their position in society, where they are divorced from the means of life, we should see them fighting the battles in the only fight that does matter—the Class War. We who lived through those four years of unparalleled destruction of precious human lives, say again, as we did in our September, 1914, issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD: "The struggle did

not justify the shedding of one single drop of Working-Class blood," and that it was "a commercial war being fought out in the interests of the Capitalist Class for the markets of the world in order to dispose of the wealth robbed from the workers." While we regret that so many workers of all countries lost their lives in the bloody shambles, the appeal of the Capitalist Class leaves us cold.

o o o

On many occasions in the columns of the SOCIALIST STANDARD we have pointed out that the object of Sinn Fein was to further the material interests of the manufacturing section of the Ruling Class of Ireland, and whatever be the outcome of the conflict between them and the British Government, the wealth producers of Ireland will find little alteration in their position.

This question was dealt with more fully in our issue of June, 1917, but we do not think it would be out of place for our readers to note the following (*Evening News*, 3/10/21):

#### "LABOUR TO FIGHT SINN FEIN."

"Irish labour leaders do not hide their anxiety regarding the future under a Sinn Fein government. Sinn Fein is claiming greater powers than Ulster regarding the repeal of legislation passed by the United Kingdom Parliament, and in particular takes exception to restrictive trade union practices which are accused of stifling Irish industrial development.

"It is well-known that some of the most prominent men in Southern Ireland believe the Trades Disputes Acts to be inimical to Irish interests and will not assume responsibility for enforcing such laws in Ireland. Realising that they may have to fight their own Government harder than they did the British authorities, the Irish labourers are preparing for conflict.

"They threaten to fight every constituency in the towns, and expect that with the issue of self-government out of the way it will be easier to make headway against official Sinn Fein."

Members of the Communist Party and the S.L.P., please note. O. C. I.

### A DEBATE

will take place on 13th November, at Stratford Town Hall, between representatives of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Commencing 7.30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m.  
ADMISSION FREE.

### SOME WHINE FROM A LABOUR LEADER.

We have received a copy of "The Labour Monthly," published by the Labour Publishing Company, Ltd., and glancing through the August issue, we notice an article by Robert Williams, entitled, "'Black Friday' and After—A Reply." We will not weary the reader with the details of this heart-to-heart talk, but there is one passage which we would dwell upon. He says:

In almost every country the vitality of the Labour Movement is at a very low ebb; it is suffering from the physical, mental and moral effects which inevitably follow as a direct consequence of war.

The militant section of the rank and file blames and condemns the leaders; the leaders ascribe the present apathy, bordering on despair, to the lack of interest or pugnacity on the part of the overwhelming masses of the rank and file. I think they are both correct. Wars have invariably been followed by periods of physical exhaustion. Ought we to expect virility, pugnacity and audacity to be the outcome of the most recent outburst of organised butchery? The fact remains, the movement, as such, has for the time, at least, lost its "punch."

Now what does all this mean so far as Williams is concerned? We suggest he anticipates lean days ahead for himself and his tribe—Labour Leader Tribe. Because if the workers lack the qualities which he describes—i.e., "virility," "pugnacity," "audacity," "punch," etc.—then from the point of view of the Labour leader it is no good flogging a dead horse. On the other hand, where there are kicks there are 'alfpence. If, however, the workers lack the attributes mentioned above, chiefly because of the effects following from the war, we would remind Mr. R. Williams that he—quite absent-mindedly, if you will—forgot to mention the valiant part which the Labour Party played towards assisting in this mental collapse on the part of the workers. Let us show more clearly what we mean. We will quote from the "Labour Leader" (3/9/14):

The head office of the Party, its entire machinery, are to be placed at the disposal of the Government in their recruiting campaign.

This foul and treacherous act he conveniently overlooks. Let us compare this act of treachery with the attitude taken up by the Socialist Party. In the September, 1914, issue of our official organ, the

SOCIALIST STANDARD, we declared in a manifesto on the war that:

Having no quarrel with the working class of any country, we extend to our fellow workers of all lands the expression of our goodwill and Socialist fraternity.

and pledged ourselves to:

Work for the overthrow of capitalism and the triumph of Socialism.

Events have proved that the position we took up then was the correct one. The Socialist Party declared themselves in such unmistakeable fashion purely as the result of their sound understanding of the Marxian theories. We have from the very beginning of our existence as a Socialist Party insisted that the workers must first understand their class position, so vividly laid bare in the writings and teachings of Marx and Engels. This implies patient devotion on the part of the workers in obtaining a clear understanding of the Marxian doctrines.

Of course, Robert Williams, a notorious leader, is not concerned with working-class education; an ignorant following is more to his liking. Therefore at the moment he is rather hard put to it to know how to occupy his time, because all his club-room observations regarding such abstractions as "pugnacity," "virility," "audacity," "punch," though sounding very racy, are quite beside the situation. Trade Union cheap-jacks, flag-waving Communist recruiting sergeants and their cheap and flashy attitudes, leave us quite cold.

Confidence in our class to steadily and surely march forward to the goal of their emancipation remains unshaken. To quote Engels in his introduction to "Socialism Utopian and Scientific":

And if the pace of the movement is not up to the impatience of some people, let them not forget that it is the working class which keeps alive the finest qualities of the English character, and that, if a step in advance is once gained in England, it is, as a rule, never lost afterwards.

We will accept this quiet compliment, the tribute of one who devoted his life to laborious patient work in the cause of Socialism, to contemptuously brush aside the treacherous whine of a Labour leader.

O. C. I.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

SATURDAY NOV. 5, 1921

**BIRDS OF A FEATHER.**

To those who depend for their knowledge of politics on the Capitalist Press, there seems to be acute antagonism between the different parties striving for power. The Coalitionists regard the Liberal and Labour parties with indifference or contempt, while the two latter parties appear to be jealous and suspicious of one another, and the noisy Anti-Waste Party attacks all three parties with equal venom. The intensity, vulgarity and violence of party strife, however, is not always a safe guide as to the importance of the issues.

When the worker examines the issues of to-day in the light of reason, he must soon be convinced that, so far as he is concerned, they are not worth wasting time over. When he examines the reforms or principles of the different parties, he must speedily come to the conclusion that there is not sufficient difference between them to warrant him taking up sides. The programme of the Labour Party, for instance, is so little different from that of the Liberals, that arrangements are frequently made between the leaders to support each other's candidates, and the rank and file of the Labour Party vote for a Liberal as a matter of course when no Labour candidate is running.

It is clear from this that there can be no real antagonism between these two parties. The other parties, we know from experience, only contend in the political arena for

control over the Parliamentary machine, with no intention of making any fundamental changes in the system. Liberals and Tories come and go, or coalesce, but Capitalism continues while they can do either. Thus all political parties prominently before the workers stand for Capitalism, their only differences being in the methods of administration.

Two things are necessary before we can pass judgment on any political party—Socialist knowledge and knowledge of the party's actions and utterances. By Socialist knowledge we mean a clear conception of the economic dependence and the political subjugation of the Working Class, together with the class antagonism that necessarily arises therefrom, and the necessity for conscious and organised action on the part of the workers for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. To the *Labour Leader* we go for information on the Labour Party's attitude and principles. Sir Leo Chiozza Money says (October 6th, 1921):

"How should a conscientious Labour man, who hopes and strives for a better condition of society and a saner economic system, treat the system that is? Should his policy be one of co-operation or non-co-operation? Should he do his best with the tools that are, or endeavour to clog, stop or destroy the machine in order to compel the making of a better one?"

"The Labour Party's answer to these questions is a common-sense one. The proposals it has issued dealing with unemployment, for example, seek to make the best of things as they are. In the background are the voices of revolution."

Where Sir Leo and all the birds in the Capitalist nest are doing their utmost to keep such voices; in the background along with the Socialist knowledge that would enable the workers to understand their position. "The proposals of the Labour Party seek to make the best of things as they are." In these words the Labour Party is summed up and condemned—by its own scribe. How is it possible, at one and the same time, to show the rottenness of a system and the need for its abolition, while contending that it should be bolstered or patched up in order to make it last longer? All they do is to raise false hopes and lead the workers away from the only solution of their difficulties. Not only so. When they join hands with Liberals and Tories and tell the workers that the only way to deal with unemployment is to capture foreign markets, they lie. Followed to its logical

conclusion, that policy increases instead of diminishes unemployment, because the faster the workers throw commodities into the world's market, the sooner they reach the goal of universal glut and stagnation.

Backed up by the Labour Party, the avowed Capitalist parties reduce wages all round, telling the workers that they cannot get more out of industry than they put in. Who stops them from putting more in? Mr. Lloyd George says the nation is producing now only 80 per cent. of its pre-war output, admits there are a million and a half unemployed through no fault of their own, and says that it is a world condition. The utter helplessness of Capitalist Governments in the face of the present crisis is apparent in every written and spoken sentence of the defenders of the system.

They are applying their minds to the question, says the Premier, but the only result from this application of great minds is, excuses for the failure of their system, accusations of ca'canny against the workers, and schemes to get necessary work done by local councils at less than Trade Union rates of wages.

One of the greatest adepts in the art of making excuses for Capitalism is Chiozza Money. In nearly every copy of the *Labour Leader*, for weeks, he has been insisting that the workers must produce more cheaply and co-operate with the Capitalists to get back our lost trade, because this country is mainly dependent on exports and shipping. If his readers gave the question a moment's consideration, they would see in this nothing but a dirty imputation that they are not doing their share in the work of production; the truth, of course, being that the workers do it all. Moreover, going slow may be possible in isolated instances when workers are in demand, but in the present congested state of the labour market must be very rare indeed. Before the Capitalists of this country can regain their lost markets, exchanges must be stabilised and European industry restored, but that is a purely Capitalist question and can only be arranged between the different conflicting groups of Capitalists themselves. The Workers have no voice in the question and cannot increase the volume of trade until they are more fully employed.

The next move is, therefore, with the Capitalists. The gentlemen who are saying that the war debts between nations should

be wiped out have made this clear. The wheels of industry can only be made to revolve when exchanges are stabilised and the countries disorganised by the war resume their normal activities. Both the Premier and Chiozza Money agree that the slump is a world condition, but both of them neglect to add that every Capitalist country can produce far in excess of its own needs, and that this excess of production over national needs is the cause of slumps. Every country must find markets for its excess, and in proportion as it fails to do so, each country finds its unemployed increasing.

Restoration of trade is the only remedy, say the captains of industry, and their political agents, from the Premier to the most obscure Labour hack, repeat their cry. Birds of a feather, they all agree that their paymasters must extend their concerns. They are harnessed to the national car of industry, and serve Capitalist interests, not only against foreign Capitalists, but against the workers of their own land, whose continued exploitation and increasing poverty is thereby insured. Agreeing that the restoration of trade is the only remedy for unemployment, they differ as to the method, and gathering into little *cliques* they raise the very devil of a noise over causes and remedies, exhorting the workers to patience all the while, until trade begins to revive, when they make still more noise about our glowing prospects.

The Capitalist Class, with its ownership of the means of wealth-production, its claim to organise industry, and its control of political power, whether it understands the nature of the crisis or not, utterly fails to deal with it. All they can do is to wait for trade to revive, while loudly proclaiming it to be the only solution. They cannot however, escape their responsibility in that way, because the workers are beginning to see that their poverty is not due to lack of means and nature-given materials. If Capitalism, as a system, therefore, is incapable of organising except on the basis of short periods of feverish production interspersed with long years of depression, sooner or later the workers will get tired of excuses and promised reforms and will give their minds to a serious study of Socialism. It is quite plain, among other things, that while Capitalism continues, unemployment, and consequently Working Class conditions generally, must become

worse; that only by the abolition of Capitalism and the establishment of a system based on production for use, can the workers' conditions be improved; that the Capitalist Class, although unable to alleviate the growing misery, will stoop to any crime in order to maintain the system and their domination over the workers. Socialism makes these facts plain—proves them conclusively—and points to the obvious deduction, the workers must organise to establish the new order for them, in spite of all opposition from the Capitalist Class.

The ruling class sits tight over the means of wealth-production, surrounded by armed forces, and it will not allow them to be used unless they can see profits accruing to them by the process. Such a situation must already appeal to millions of workers as ludicrous. The bulk of human society, held at bay by a relatively small class who live in luxury and idleness and regard it as a favour bestowed when they permit a propertyless human being to work and produce more wealth for them in return for his keep.

This is the actual basis of Capitalist society, the class ownership of the means of life and production for profit. The workers can only live by selling their labour-power; becoming wage-slaves to the master-class. By this means they are robbed of all the wealth they produce beyond what is necessary to keep them fit for work. It is to their interest, therefore, to understand this position and organise upon the basis of their class in order to put an end to Capitalism and establish a system where freely associating men and women will produce for use instead of for Capitalist profit.

Such an organisation will be antagonistic to all Capitalist parties and will recognise the genuine Working Class parties of other lands by the similarity of their principles. They will thus march forward in a real international to capture political power in every country and wipe out the system that denies them the use of the land and means of production for the satisfaction of their material needs.

By such principles the workers will also judge those who profess to lead them. They can safely repudiate the advice of those who tell them to work harder in order to capture foreign markets, because such a course can only benefit the Capitalist. Birds of a feather invariably croak on the same notes.

We cannot, therefore, mistake the friends of the Capitalist even when they label themselves "Labour."

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## A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF SOCIALIST THEORY.

VALUE—continued.

The last article under the above heading appeared in the SOCIALIST STANDARD of December, 1920. The long interruption in the series was due to circumstances out of the control of the writer.

In the article referred to, we commenced the discussion of the theory of value; the following is a summary of the conclusions arrived at:

Economic wealth is the result of human energy applied to the materials provided by nature.

The wealth of to-day appears as a multitude of useful articles for sale—commodities.

A commodity is a useful article (not to the producer, but to the potential buyer) produced for sale.

The uses of such an article are as many as the human wants it can satisfy; but these uses have no connection with its value.

The value of an article is something contained in it that is only expressed in exchange. Absolute value cannot be expressed, only relative value.

The only common property of all commodities, apart from their physical properties, is their property of being the product of human energy.

All commodities represent certain proportions of simple human energy.

Human energy is measured by time.

The value of a commodity is measured by its cost of reproduction in human labour time—the time simple human energy would occupy in reproducing it.

The conclusion that the value of an article is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour contained in it, gives us the key to the apparent mystery of commodities. At the bottom, commodities represent the relation of the labour of one man, or group of men, to that of another man, or group of men; this relation becomes mysterious, simply because it appears before our eyes as a relation between two articles. In other words, at the back of the expression of value lies the relation between different methods of expending human energy.

The next point we have to consider is the double-sided nature of the labour contained in commodities. On this point Marx wrote as follows:

"I was the first to point out and to examine critically this twofold nature of the labour contained in commodities. As this point is the pivot on which a clear comprehension of political economy turns, we must go more into detail."

We have seen that a commodity is a useful article and a value; and that the latter is determined by the amount of labour-

power required to reproduce such an article. But just as an article must be looked at from two points of view, so also must the labour contained in it. For example, the labour incorporated in a commodity appears on the one side as the work of a baker, a shoemaker, an engineer, and so forth. That is to say, labour of a particular kind or quality, labour that produces a particular kind of article. But on the other side it appears just as the simple expenditure of human energy—getting tired. All its particular physical characteristics are abstracted and it is viewed as the normal activity of the human organism.

If, therefore, taking for illustration the simple exchange of one article for another, we say: 1 pair of boots = 1 hat,

we are simply stating that the same general substance—human energy—exists in the same quantity on each side of this statement or equation.

On the one hand, therefore, we have concrete or useful labour; on the other hand, abstract or value-creating labour. We look at one from the point of view of quality—the kind of labour (baking, engineering, etc.), we look at the other from the point of view of quantity—the amount of labour; the unifying point is the fact that labour of different qualities is, at the bottom, the simple expenditure of human energy.

From the above it will be seen that labour expressed in value has different attributes from labour as a producer of use-value. This enables us to understand another point around which there is a considerable amount of confusion.

At a first glance it would appear that an increase in the quantity of articles produced would necessarily result in an increase in value—more articles, more value. If we examine the matter closely, in connection with what we have already learnt of the twofold nature of labour, we will see that the above statement is not correct.

Suppose a method of producing boots was discovered whereby two pairs of boots could now be produced with the expenditure of the same amount of energy as it formerly took to produce one pair; we would now have two pairs of boots instead of one (an increase in material wealth), but the same quantity of value is contained in the increased amount of wealth as was formerly contained in the smaller amount. This illustration shows the necessity of under-

standing the twofold nature of labour contained in commodities.

As different commodities are the products of different kinds of labour, commodity production—Capitalism—could not come into existence until the method of expending human labour power had reached the point where it was split up into a multitude of different kinds carried on independently of each other. To put the case another way: Before the exchange of products in the form of commodities can exist as a social basis, the labour of society must have become sectionalised in such a manner that human energy is expended in different ways, each way being carried on independently and for the account of private individuals; there must have arisen a social division of labour. This naturally follows when we remember that, in bringing two different commodities upon the market to exchange for each other, we are in reality exchanging two different kinds of labour. There would be no point in exchanging one hat for another of exactly the same description, *i.e.*, the labour of a hatter for the labour of a hatter. From this fact it follows that while we can have the social division of labour (as in primitive societies) without commodity production, we cannot have commodity production without the social division of labour.

The value of a commodity represents the expenditure of human labour in general, but this simple labour is generally expended under the cloak of labour of different degrees of skill. Skilled labour in essence is more intensified simple labour—a given quantity of skilled labour is equal to a greater quantity of simple labour.

In the process of commodity production all kinds of labour—no matter what the degree of skill may be—are reduced to the simple expenditure of human energy. This reduction of skilled labour to simple labour is not done openly or consciously—as Marx puts it:

"The different proportions in which different sorts of labour are reduced to unskilled labour as their standard are established by a social process that goes on behind the backs of the producers, and, consequently, appear to be fixed by custom."

A good illustration of the point with which we are dealing was provided in the Whistler *versus* Ruskin case some years ago.

In the course of the action, one of Whistler's pictures (the subject of the

action, the "Nocturne in Black and Gold") came up for discussion. This picture had been exhibited at a gallery and marked two hundred guineas. After Whistler had informed the Attorney-General that, altogether, he had only been two days working upon it, the latter asked: "Oh, two days! The labour of two days, then, is that for which you ask two hundred guineas!" To this Whistler replied: "No; I ask it for the knowledge of a lifetime."

The above puts the case in a nutshell. Highly skilled labour is the result of the expenditure of energy in the past to make it skilful—it is more intensified labour—a multiple of simple energy.

GILMAC.

(To be continued.)

### OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS ARE THEY CONVICTED.

"Reynolds's" (4/9/21) publishes the following:

#### BISHOP ON WORKERS' UNREST.

"A reporter in Edinburgh complimented the Prime Minister a few days ago upon his attendance at Divine Service morning and evening in that famous city," said Bishop Weldon in the course of an interview. "I am one who cannot but look with regret on the growing laxity in the observance of Sunday."

"In country houses the Sunday is sadly often devoted to golf and tennis. The oblivion of God in society is responsible in no slight measure for the spirit of unrest in the working classes. The rich are always few, the poor are many; but if it is made evident to the poor that the rich have forfeited their belief in God and the future life, then it is as certain as any event can be, that the poor will claim a predominant share in the good things of this life as compensation for the loss of the hope which once centred in the life after death," etc., etc.

G. H.

### OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Discussion Classes are held after 8.30 every Monday evening, by N.W. LONDON BRANCH,

at

107, Charlotte Street, W.1 (First floor).

### MARX IN MINIATURE.

*The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx.* By M. Beer. National Labour Press, Ltd. 3s. 6d. net.

As an example of stern compression and yet lucid exposition of Marx's teachings, this little book deserves high praise. In 132 pages of fair-sized type there is given a sketch of the life of Marx, his development in knowledge and thought, his work in the various movements of the Working Class, his theories of history and class struggles, and his economic discoveries. In addition, a brief account of the Hegelian Philosophy, so far as it deals with the Dialectic, is placed in 19 pages of the Introduction. Marx's connection and debt to this school of philosophy is well shown.

After so clear a summary of Marx's economic theories, it is astounding to find the following statements by M. Beer on page 130:

"Marx's theory of value explains neither the vast and unparalleled accumulation of wealth nor the movement of prices during the last sixty years. Wealth, measured in values, has, in the last few decades, increased by many times the increase in living labour power. In this connection the old formula can be reversed: wealth increases in geometrical, living labour power in arithmetical progression. The greatest difficulty in Marx is that inventors and discoverers, the chemists and physicists, the pioneers and organisers of industry and agriculture are not regarded by him as creators of surplus value. Thinkers who, by chemical researches and discoveries, double the productive capacity of the soil and conjure forth values in millions from the waste products of industry; physicists who place new sources of power and means of production at the disposal of mankind and multiply the productivity of labour; organisers who co-ordinate the forces of production and introduce new methods of working—all this creative and directive work demanding, as it often does, an infinite amount of intensive intellectual effort, is not considered to have increased the total sum of exchange values of the nation."

How familiar, even stale, all this reads to the student of Marx. How long, for instance, is it since W. H. Mallock said very similar things and tried to justify the Capitalists' ownership of wealth by claiming that it was due to the wonderful intellectual endowment "of the Few."

And in another respect M. Beer is like Mallock and Co.—he is unable to give any alternative explanation. Nay, more; he does not even attempt to demonstrate or prove his case—he merely states it and passes on. Fortunately, there is one author who has met the objection of M. Beer that

"creative and directive work" does not count in the theory of value. This author says:

"All combined labour on a large scale requires more or less a directing authority in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities, and to perform the general functions that have their origin in the action of the combined organism, as distinguished from the action of its separate organs. A single violin player is his own conductor; an orchestra requires a separate one."

Further on the same author says:

"As co-operation extends its scale this despotism takes forms peculiar to itself. Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour as soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workman and groups of workmen, to a special kind of wage labourer."

This author's name is Karl Marx, and the quotations will be found on pages 321 and 322 of "Capital" (Sonnenschein Ed.). It is the wage-labourer who provides exchange value, and, as here seen, the organisers, chemists, physicists, etc., are but "special kinds of wage-labourers."

In the matter of prices, Marx was always careful to point out that, while he assumed free and full competition among the Capitalists in working out his theory, the factor of monopoly would make an important difference. This is seen to-day where combinations or trusts exist. Here prices are fixed by what "the market will bear," though the latter will sometimes be affected by the competition of substitutes. The Standard Oil Trust has a practical monopoly of petroleum oils used in Australia; but local substitutes act to keep down the price of petroleum to a certain level. But even in these cases the difference between price and value, and the enormous profits made by many Trusts, are only explainable by Marxian laws—no other explanation fits the facts. Strange to relate, after all the shortcomings of the Marxian theory which M. Beer has discovered, he says:

"However, as far as the distribution of products is concerned, Marx's theory is, generally speaking, correct."—Page 130.

This admission knocks out so much of his previous statement, that one wonders why either—or both—were made.

The charge of three shillings and sixpence net for a 132 pages pamphlet in paper covers is ridiculously high. In view of the usefulness of the work, the price should be reduced to bring it within the reach of the mass of the workers.

J. FITZGERALD.

**THE WEALTHY SOCIALIST.**

The general attitude of the worker towards those possessing wealth is amusingly paradoxical. It is the heritage of serfdom, together with his present servile existence, that engenders the attitude of respect he will always adopt. Yet let him learn of a member of the bourgeoisie who has taken up a stand on behalf of the workers and displayed a knowledge of working-class conditions, and he will regard him sceptically, as who should say: "He's got money; how can he know anything of us who haven't?" Although that very same worker, and this is where the paradox comes in, refuses to think any other way than with the bourgeoisie. He reads and quotes the propaganda they disseminate in their press. He prefers to vote for a candidate who is of the master class, because he feels that such a candidate, being educated and well endowed with the world's goods, must be, necessarily, better able to represent him in Parliament. It is still quite common to regard M.P.'s in the same category as "toffs," and a little high-sounding rhetoric and an Oxford accent is a good deal more than half the battle at election time.

A grand example of the falsity of such a position is brought home to us when we consider the life and work of Frederick Engels. Engels was bourgeois by birth and environment, and died worth a considerable amount of money, yet no man, perhaps not even Marx himself, understood the proletarian psychology better. He was the son of an affluent Manchester merchant who needn't have bothered a bit about the working-class had he chose. But the very fact that his studies and investigations had discovered to him the workings of the social system, forced him, being honest, to write the monumental works so invaluable to the student of Socialism, in spite of his wealth.

This must not be confused with the Fabian argument that the emancipation of the Working Class can only be accomplished by the "intelligentsia" of the middle class. The emancipation of the working class must be the work of that class itself. All that is necessary is that it shall become class-conscious and organise to capture the political machinery at present in the hands of the capitalist class. The slum workers and social reformers of the middle class do not understand the economic forces which dominate

Society. If they did, they would not waste time in patching up a system which is rotten right at the roots.

It is not necessary to go down a mine to understand that miners are exploited, nor is it impossible for a millionaire to know that his millions come from the blood and sweat of a robbed proletariat. There is nothing, save, of course, a misunderstanding of the Socialist philosophy, to prevent any member of Society, of whatever social standing, proclaiming himself a Socialist and joining the Socialist Party to work for the emancipation of Society itself. The working class must take the trouble to think for themselves, not waste time wondering whether a man with unsoiled hands really can know anything about factory hells and slums, analyse their position, form their own conclusions and act upon them, then the day of capitalism will close upon the horrors and terrors it has given birth to, and the morrow will dawn brighter and happier for the whole human family. S.

**CONSTITUTIONALISM.**

When the Socialist Party says that it is correct to observe the constitutional rules laid down by the political powers of the capitalist class, that band of revolutionary cheap-jacks and super-opportunists calling themselves Communists tell us we are treading the wrong path.

They endeavour to prove that a working class party must conduct its fight for supremacy in accordance with rules of its own; that it is futile and waste of time thinking that the ruling class will permit its subject class—the workers—to vote them out of power. Of course, this sounds very heroic and is on a par with the loud-mouthed utterances of all the big men in the Labour movement, who profit by shouting red-hot phrases. Their motto is to make plenty of noise, attract the support of the rank and file, and wax fat on the coppers which they are able to extract from their dupes. We are not surprised, therefore, that an organisation like the Communist Party display inconsistency at times. For example, we notice that during the last few weeks they have acknowledged the necessity of adopting constitutional action. For example, the Edinburgh Branch of the Communist Party applied to the local magistrates recently for permis-

sion to organise a badge day on behalf of the Russian Famine Fund. Permission was refused. But fancy asking the powers that be for their permission!

Further, at the Caerphilly Bye-Election they put up a representative, and in so doing were necessarily compelled to observe the legal procedure of the political power of organised constitutional capitalism, i.e., the necessary deposit had to be made according to the law, before a candidate can enter the political arena, no matter what party he represents. It is interesting to read the report of the Communist Party on the result of the Caerphilly Election. The writer spills much ink describing the *eleventh-hour stunts* resorted to in order to convince the workers of the truths of Communism.

The wild spontaneous raids which are made by political parties at election times are quite the usual thing, and law and order winks at many of the escapades indulged in by the political parties and their followers on these occasions. And once more the Communist Party in quite the orthodox manner endeavoured to out-stunt all the other electioneering stunt specialists.

Men and women are not convinced of the principles of a political policy such as the Socialist Party holds, in five minutes. This is another instance to show that the Communist Party is a confusionist organisation. It adopts all the orthodox methods and tricks of the trade of the political profiteer, endeavouring to ride into office with a few revolutionary war-cries, upon the backs of an ignorant following. Let the workers make the most of their opportunity to become acquainted with Marxian theories; not until they understand them will they be able to take sound action. When that time comes the howls of the revolutionary opportunists of the Communist Party brand will pass unheeded.

D. C. J.

**THE PEACE SOCIETY.**

A Demonstration was held on Thursday, October 13th, at the Central Hall, to further the agitation for Disarmament. It should be obvious that the Capitalist Governments of the world arm against each other because they must, war being the logical and necessary outcome of their economic rivalry.

While, therefore, the prospect of economising, by mutual agreement to limit expenditure, is attractive to the employing class who have to bear the burden, to appeal to a national group of Capitalists to give up their only defence against their like-minded predatory neighbours and against the workers from whose robbery the privileged position of the Capitalist Class arises, is to ask them to commit suicide, and will naturally be given the amount of consideration such a proposal would deserve. Is it to be expected that our Capitalist rulers, armed to the teeth to defend their private property, will scrap their armaments and voluntarily sacrifice their hold on the world's wealth merely in response to an *appeal* from muddle-headed reformers?

This is the measure of the futility of the well-meaning people who support such ventures.

The Bishop of London, distinguished for his Christianly ferocious thirst for blood in the late war, asked God's blessing on the Washington Conference, meaning, no doubt, that he hoped the Empire would find favour in the sight of the Lord and get a thumping big share of the spoils in the partition of China. The speakers, ex front-line, front-page, and front-bench warriors, were no doubt doing their duty by the Ruling Class in talking platitudes about peace in the present interlude between the last "last war" and the next "last war," because at the moment it is desirable to distract Working Class attention from the lining-up for the conflict to decide the mastery of the Pacific.

There were the usual jibes against the workers for their failure to oppose the war, from the lips of one-time recruiting sergeants like MacDonald; and Mr. Edo Fimmen, who, as Secretary of the International Federation of Trade Unions, only a month or two ago was explaining to Sam Gompers that when his Federation talked about "Socialisation," it distinctly did not mean Socialism, and had the impudence to claim the right to speak on behalf of the Socialist workers of Europe.

The slogan under which the meeting was advertised was: "Rally in your thousands to support the war to end war." This must have brought back to the speakers happy memories of the dope they were handing out to the workers in 1914.

E. H.

**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 8 Matthew-st., Letchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Mondays, 8.30, at 16 Creek-st., York-rd.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.8. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDMONTON.**—Communications to the Sec., 142 Bulwer-rd., Edmonton, N.18.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at the Sigdon-rd. Schools, opposite Hackney Downs Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., T. Travis, 27, Arthur Street, Cobridge, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Communications to Sec., J. Lloyd 2 Chapel-st., Chester-rd., Hulme, Manchester.

**N.W. LONDON.**—Branch meets Monday at 7, at 107, Charlotte Street, W.1. Communications to Sec., 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Sec., 24 Worslader-rd., Tooting, S.W.17. Branch meets Fridays at Parochial Hall, Church-lane, Tooting, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., C. Stowe, 15 Culvert-rd., S. Tottenham, N.15. Branch meets Saturdays 7.30 at Earlsmead Schools, Broad-lane, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to Sec., 11 Carlton-rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.** Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 at Brook Hall, Brook-rd., Mayes-rd., N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Edmonton, Silver Street, 11.30 a.m.  
Hinsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Stratford, Vicarage-lane, 7.30 p.m.  
Tooting Broadway, Garrett-lane, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3.30 p.m.  
Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 7.30 p.m.

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Tuesdays:**

Tooting, Church-lane, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:**

Dalston, Queen's-road, 8.30 p.m.  
Wimbledon Broadway, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junction Clyde-road and Phillip-lane, 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Undine-street, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

## IRELAND, THE LABOUR PARTY, AND THE EMPIRE.

After a long and bitter struggle, there is at last the prospect of peace in Ireland. The workers of Ulster and the South have fought with a fervour only equalled by the frenzy of the late world war, and are now to be able to see what it really was they fought for. If they hope for anything better than the fate common to ex-soldiers in all the countries of Europe—victors and vanquished alike—then disappointment awaits them.

Sinn Fein, behind a screen of fine-sounding no-surrender proclamations, appears to be preparing to forego the demand for full recognition of Ireland's status as an independent Republic; while the English Government, under the pressure of a variety of political and financial factors, considers the cost of continued refusal of concessions prohibitive, and offers a form of Dominion Home Rule.

The chief, the economic, causes of the dispute are not far to seek. The northern Capitalists, whose prosperity lies in their easy access to markets within or protected by the British Empire, could never submit to being cut off from the source of their wealth. Similarly, the numerically strong body of farmers and traders in the South, plundered and thwarted for centuries by successive English Governments, and seeing themselves, for the benefit of their competitors, denied the right of freely developing commercial relations abroad, looked to the victory of Sinn Fein as the precursor of a new era of expansion for their trade. Add to this the hopes of the younger generation for satisfaction of their hunger for land, hitherto inaccessible to them owing to foreign ownership and profitable use for

non-agricultural purposes, and we have some idea of the material basis for the Irish war.

The workers were called upon to take up arms for objects far enough removed from these, "Protestantism and the Flag" or "Catholicism and Liberty," as geographical accident ordained: it was always the trade of the politician to provide plausible excuses. They responded with the usual disastrous results for themselves. Under the pretext of the necessity for presenting a united front to the external enemy, robbed and robbers, workers and employers, closed up their ranks to the manifest advantage of the latter.

Trade Union organisation was wrecked by internal dissension, or rendered innocuous in the larger interest of patriotism, that is, of the employers, whether Belfast shipbuilders or Southern farmers. Now, with the coming of peace, the class struggle will once more be forced to the front, and whether the wage-earners are in a position to resist attempts to lower their standard of living or not, they can at least learn the lesson of their recent folly. In Erin, no more than in this or any other Capitalist country, do war slogans or the sentiments of national brotherhood weigh heavily where they conflict with profit-making.

The cessation of guerilla warfare and the raising of martial law will provide a welcome removal of political and mental obstacles to our propaganda, but it must always be remembered that the form, the time, and the terms of the peace are in the hands of the Ruling Class. Theirs is the political control, and the accompanying military power enables them to give or

withhold, and to bargain as they think fit. On neither side have the workers the deciding voice.

As might be expected, the Labour Party, which has long put at the forefront of its programme the solution of the Irish problem, has something to say at this juncture which incidentally is of interest to us. The Labour Party, as also might have been expected by those who know that body, puts the case for the English Capitalist Class.

At the height of the conflict, when there was no sign of a weakening on either side, or of any kind of rapprochement, the Labour Party, somewhat vaguely it is true, stood for Ireland's right to Independence, with but two qualifications: guarantees for the protection of minorities and against the possibility of future military or naval menace to this country. Now, however, that changed circumstances or changed feeling in the constituencies lead the Government to negotiate, the Labour Party withdraws from the attitude it had taken up. When war is the order of the day, it is useful but harmless in bye-election tactics to promise Independence, but when Capital decides to have peace and the actual terms are to be settled, the Labour Party is called to heel and must follow its masters.

Thus we have Mr. J. H. Thomas declaring (*Daily Herald*, September 2nd) that "no political party in England can hold out any hope of an Irish Republic." The *Herald* commented adversely on this "astounding" remark, and dismissed it as a private opinion only, not representative of the Labour Party.

Curiously enough, a week before, H. N. Brailsford had written in the *Herald*, under the title "Ireland and Sea-Power," expressing the same opinion in even more vigorous language, and it is with this that I propose to deal. The "*Daily Herald*" did not comment on Brailsford's article!

Brailsford is a Labour candidate, and in the "*Labour Daily*" which in this instance claims that it represents the real attitude of the Labour Party, he writes as follows (August 30th):

"The British Government (with the nation behind it) is, I believe, sincere in its readiness to yield everything except naval control. . . . In plain words the issue for the British people is our world power. That is the only issue for which we ever fight, . . . but it is an issue for which we always fight, and will fight. It was the issue in the world war; first, because the German navy

challenged ours, and, secondly, because a German occupation of the Belgian coast must have interfered with our control of Dover Straits. . . . For sea-power is the instrument of our economic expansion. Upon it rests our possession of half Africa and all India, and our ability to expand at will in China or elsewhere."

This is somewhat staggering, and one cannot help wondering whether the hundreds of thousands of out-of-work ex-soldiers are fully appreciative of the advantages that accrue to them through their "possession" of "half Africa and all India." To continue with the quotation:

"No instinct is so deeply rooted in us all (the exceptions are negligible) as the instinct which teaches us without talk or exhortation, or reflection, to guard our naval ascendancy against any risk. None even of the sincerest advocates of the League of Nations (not even Lord Robert Cecil) had a word to say in support of Mr. Wilson's proposals for the freedom of the seas. No one criticises (I except the eccentrics) the virtual British seizure of Constantinople."

"One may feel sure in advance that while we may accept, or even propose at Washington, a limitation in shipbuilding, we shall not agree to abate by a single vital concession our unlimited and uncontrolled right to blockade."

Incidentally this throws an interesting light on the *bona-fides* of the League of Nations and on the use to the workers of it and its Labour Party backers. We notice, too, that the "eccentrics" are excluded from those the Labour Party claims to represent. For my part, I must confess to being one of them: the deep-rooted instinct of guarding "our naval ascendancy" seems to have passed me by, and I simply never froth at the mouth at the mention of this bloody old Empire.

"We are ready to concede much . . . , but we will no more give up our naval stations on the Irish coast than we will give up Gibraltar or Malta or the Suez Canal. To do so would be to begin to give up world-power."

"On the ordinary level of thought (Tolstoyans, Quakers and Communists are the only exceptions) we are acting rationally. An independent Ireland would be a danger. Our next enemy at sea would assuredly occupy, or try to occupy, it. Belgium was not the only violated neutral in the last war. China, Greece, Persia, and Albania were all used or over run. There will be no yielding here . . . and Irishmen who expect us to yield eventually will have to wait till our Empire is overthrown and our sea-power vanished like Germany's."

Have you grasped the full import of this frank statement of what the Labour Party stands for? The class privileges of the Capitalists are in question, and the Labour Party is forced into the open to defend them.

Of course, the Ruling Class will not allow the Empire to be endangered by an independent Ireland. The Empire is theirs, and they won't see their private property damaged, unless superior force compels. That is simple enough. They have the power, and use it to protect and further their interests against opposition from workers and other States alike. But what is the Labour Party doing in this?

They offer themselves as an alternative to the Coalition and are in great hopes of early success. We consider them worthy of condemnation for their past record alone, but are told we should give them a chance, and wait and judge by results. Well, here is their own promise of their intentions. The fulfilment may be worse; it can hardly be better. Not only Ireland is touched upon:

"The (Washington) Conference may then be futile, and, over the issue of Imperialist exploitation in the Far East, the naval rivalry will begin in earnest, and ultimately we may find ourselves involved even in war."

What does this mean in brief? Just this: The wealth of the Empire, built up by the toil and sacrifice of generations of British workers, is to remain what it now is, the exclusive possession of our exploiters, and for their acquiescence in this the Labour Party is to be graciously permitted to take over the Government. Only nominally in power, they will be, in reality, as helpless as the Labour Governments in Australia, and will serve, as they are intended as serve, as the last defence of the Capitalist system.

Hoodwinked by a repetition from the mouths of their leaders, of the old fiction of the alleged community of interest between themselves and the employers, the workers are again to be privileged to defend the country they do not own, against all comers, from the Capitalists of U.S.A. to the Irish Republicans. Their reward will be the reward the unemployed are reaping now.

Did the last war concern the workers, or will the next? Does it matter to them that "our" naval supremacy should remain intact, any more than it matters whether Sinn Féin colours or the Union Jack fly over Dublin, or whether the German Black, Red and Gold, or the flag of Poland mocks their poverty in Silesia?

While the Capitalist Class dominates the civilised world, and owns and controls all

the means of wealth production, the disposal of nations in this or that empire or sphere of economic interest is not the business of the Working Class. If you think the choice of war ministers as between, say, Churchill and Col. Will Thorne, to direct you to the slaughter-house, is worth worrying about, then, of course, you will select your respective champions in the Coalition or the Labour Party.

If you don't, and if you consider it time that any fighting the workers may have to do, be done for their own emancipation from the system which makes wars inevitable, you will be well repaid for the devotion of a few hours to the study of Socialism. There is urgent need for you inside *The Socialist Party*.

E. R. H.

### JOTTINGS.

The Hon. William Jennings Bryan has been having a fling at the scientists in the *Pentecostal Herald* (Louisville, Ky.). He falls foul of Darwinism and the doctrine of evolution in general. He flatly refuses to believe that evolution has taken place by the processes described and proved by the scientists, and asks: "Isn't it strange that they can teach this tommy-rot to students and look serious about it?"

The strange thing to-day is how people can believe the tommy-rot that Bryan and his friends teach, in view of the fact that there is enough evidence on every hand not only to discredit it, but to pulverize it.

Unfortunately, the scientists themselves are not straightforward in these matters. When persons of the standing of Bryan get up, there are very few scientists courageous enough to get up in turn and put the quietus on the dope dispensers. Either they remain silent, or, if they do reply, they hasten to say that science in no way clashes with the Bible. This in spite of the incontrovertible facts they have established. Why is this? Are they afraid of these people? Only recently a serial publication was issued claiming in its prospectus that its sole aim and purpose was to provide a clear and concise view of the essentials of present-day science, in the interests of the general public, yet finished up by saying: "Matter, as now viewed by science, is something as

little materialistic in the old sense as could be well imagined . . .

"True science does not seek to deprive man of his soul, or to drive the Creator from His Universe." Can you beat it? Either this is cowardice or fear—or both. Why? We may hazard a guess. It may be that if the scientists of to-day were too assiduous in the spreading of accurate knowledge of the facts of life *within reach of the working class*, they would find their support, financial and otherwise, withdrawn, and, like Othello, their occupation gone. We know that under a capitalist system those who pay the piper call the tune.

o o o

A shocking state of affairs has been disclosed by a Capt. Bagley in the *Sunday Times*, arising out of the policing of white people by coloured troops in the occupied regions of Germany.

Readers are now contributing their impressions of what they have seen in this area, and are asking what the British people intend to do about it.

We can tell them what they are likely to do about it—Nothing.

"There are men who often stand forth in questions of morality; one heard their voices when German atrocities were to the fore. Why are these men's voices silent now?" Why, because it is now "up another street." When they concerned themselves before it was part of a policy "to win the war." It was all claptrap, of course, but it served its purpose.

o o o

Blatchford's patriotic sentiments have been hurt by an article of Bernard Shaw's in the *Nation*, in which the latter states his reasons for not attending the Washington Conference. Shaw states that the Conference will fail because nobody is really sincere.

" . . . though the Conference may stage one or two public meetings within earshot of the Press, nothing real will be done or told there. . . . In Washington the delegates who really matter will confer; but they will not confer in public." This is exactly what did happen, so that Blatchford's sloppy adulation of our ruling class

receives a bit of a set-back. "We shall learn nothing about this Conference from the Conference itself. Its business is now avowedly not disarmament, but the old task of arranging a balance of power that will be satisfactory to all parties." (Shaw.) Blatchford won't have this; but can anyone imagine the capitalists of the world disarming—even partly—and living in complete concord? The idea is absurd. To call it a step in the direction of total disarmament, as Blatchford does, is simply nonsense. Their interests will not permit it. What would they do in cases of wholesale working class repression? Surely they will not relinquish quietly the most effective method—Force!

However, they are not thinking of doing this. A little item in the *Observer* (20.11.'21) goes to show that Shaw was nearer the mark than Blatchford—"The War Office is making its plans for the organisation of twenty-three general hospitals, to be located in large towns near Universities and civil hospitals, and capable of dealing with from 25,000 to 35,000 casualties. It appeals for the valuable co-operation of the Universities and civil hospitals."

No; war will not be "outlawed" so long as our masters have something to start a fight over, fools to do the fighting, and prominent men to encourage them. When Blatchford (*Sunday Herald*, 20.11.'21) says: "There is no Power represented at the Conference that wants war, that does not hate war," we—well, we simply smile.

o o o

The "Great Silence" dope was pulled off all right. Except for the howling of sirens, the blowing of whistles, the hooting of horns, the banging of guns, and the noise of running engines in standing motor cars, you could have heard a pin drop. Like most swindles, it has caught on, and there is talk of making it a permanent institution—that is, until some selfish employer one day discovers that the slowing down, preparatory to the two minutes, and the gradual starting up again interferes with production, and consequently profits.

Thousands of troops and ex-service men (chiefly unemployed through the Big War) dutifully lined up and paid their tribute to that section of the working class known as the "Glorious Dead."

One man, according to the *Manchester City News* (12.11.'21), who either forgot the solemnity of the occasion or chose to ignore it, was forcibly stopped in one of the main streets of Manchester by an Army officer and compelled to stand. At the expiration of the two minutes an ex-service man walked up to him and bashed him in the face.

o o o

Some of the beer now being consumed by the public is alleged to contain injurious chemicals. It has been noticed lately that the beer spilled on the counters in bars is having a burning action on the wood.—*Daily Mail* (1.11.'21).

That, taken in conjunction with what G. H. Roberts, M.P., said at the Brewers' Exhibition luncheon recently, explains a good deal.

He told them that when he was Food Controller during the war, the Government caused the beer to be diverted to places where industrial unrest was most acute, in order to induce the workers to maintain their output.

Although some members of the Government were staunch teetotallers, they were obliged to face the fact that if they had not had that beer at their disposal, our gallant men in various theatres of the war might have been hampered in their great task.—*Observer* (30.10.'21).

So we can be told now that it was a mentality induced by bad beer that won the war! And a Labour man takes the credit for it! This is a point worth noting.

There is no doubt about it that the mass of the workers to-day are both mentally and physically poisoned. What with religion and labour faking, cinemas and bad beer—is it any wonder? Probably this will account to some extent for their indifference to the slammings they keep getting. The amount of mental damage inflicted by various forms of dope is appalling.

Will readers assist us in providing the necessary antidote by a small donation to our Thousand Pound Fund?

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## THE FORCE OF CONDITIONS.

How correct was Marx's deduction from his social studies, that a society

"can neither clear by bold leaps nor remove by legal enactments the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth pangs." (Preface to *Capital*.)

is shown by the present position in Russia. When the Bolsheviks had obtained control of power it was pointed out that the economic conditions of a country still largely in a feudalistic state, with the bulk of its population consisting of peasants, prevented the establishment of *social* control of the means of life. The blind followers of the Bolsheviks answered by pointing to the vast mass of propagandist literature circulated among the peasantry—80 per cent. of whom could not read!—which had converted the large majority to Socialism in two or three months.

What was the magic in this wonderful literature that accomplished more in days than the Socialists of the Western World had been able to achieve in years? Or was it that the Russian peasant is possessed of an intelligence immensely greater than that of the Western worker? Generally the answer was in line with the second query. The Russian peasant's mind, we were told, had not been poisoned by the teaching and the propaganda of the capitalists, and so was far more able to understand and appreciate the Socialist teaching than the Western worker. It is true that no evidence, beyond the continued rule of the Bolsheviks, was ever given for these statements. Still this did not prevent the claims being constantly made.

For some time past certain writers in the capitalist press, i.e., M. Farbman in the "Observer," had stated that small production and trading *for private profit*, was not only being allowed, but even encouraged in Russia. At first these reports, that were in such flat contradiction to the claims of Lenin's followers, were denounced as "capitalist lies."

Now, however, in the "Labour Monthly" for November, appears an article by J. Larin, a Bolshevik official, entitled "The New Economic Policy in Russia," in which he attempts to defend this policy (embodied in Decrees of April 7 and May 13) of allowing free trading and domestic industry for private profit. Not only does

he defend these decrees, but to the utter confusion of Lenin's followers here, he claims that these things were on the original programme of the Bolsheviks in 1918 and had existed for some time after the Bolsheviks had come into power.

In 1919 and 1920 small production and trading for private profit were forbidden. It is true that the Bolsheviks were not able to suppress this trading altogether, and a great deal of illegal business was done during those years. Still, the law was passed and *all* business was supposed to be under Government control.

Why this new change of policy? Larin's explanation is worth noting. A Decree had been issued in November, 1918, under which

"Trading in the products of domestic, craft, and small private industry remained free both for individuals and for the co-operative societies. . . . But here we met with political reasons which paralysed our policy in practice—and these reasons must be sought for not amongst the peasantry, and not amongst the workers. The town bourgeoisie itself simply refused to trade and refused to carry on its small undertakings. The laws remained, but the stores and workshops became empty, as the owners would not any longer risk their capital under the Bolsheviks." P. 431-2.)

Here we have not only the claims of Lenin's followers torn to shreds, but also a splendid example of how conditions force policies in spite of all theories to the contrary.

Larin's explanation, however, is to some extent, contradicted by Lenin. In the weekly edition of the "Manchester Guardian" for 11th November, is a report of a speech by Lenin, taken from two Communist papers—the Berlin "Novy Pont" and the Riga "Novy Mir." According to this report Lenin stated that

"their economic policy during the first period assumed the possibility of passing directly from the old economic system to the State control of production and to distribution on a Communist basis."

It will be seen that this statement contradicts Larin's claims, while further on, Lenin, after referring to their being compelled to wage civil war, continues:—

"Under the influence of this state of things and of the desperate situation in which the Republic then was, under the influence of other circumstances of which this is not the time to speak, we made a blunder; we decided to pass immediately to Communist production and distribution,"

and a little later he describes the result as "a severe economic defeat," and said they were "falling back in a disorder."

Despite the contradictions between Larin

and Lenin, they are both agreed upon the fundamental fact—namely, that it was impossible to establish Socialism in Russia to-day, and that, therefore, they must allow capitalism to operate, beginning with small industry and trading. Surely a striking vindication of Marx.

J.F.

## GHOSTS

The world is suffering from a plethora of fat boys who will persist in trying to make our flesh creep. We have no objection to them practising their black magic in the privacy of their back parlours, to the prostration of their maiden aunts, but the limit is reached when they insist upon the rest of the world witnessing their performances. We refer to that cult of neurotics of both sexes, viz., "Spiritualism," and to the publicity that the "sensation press" is giving it.

Some time ago the *Weekly Dispatch* worked overtime getting out extra copies, while it was running a series of articles by Mr. Vale Owen which purported to convey "communications from departed spirits." Now Mr. James Douglas, the editor of the *Sunday Express* is performing similar stunts albeit in the guise of a "not-yet-convinced agnostic." Yet it is easy to perceive that Mr. Douglas, as a smart journalist, is, among other things, endeavouring to emulate the commercial success of his contemporary and draw the coppers from the pockets of the mystified working class to the coffers of Lord Beaverbrook, "the apostle of success."

Although one may have a doubt as to whether Mr. V. Owen was a knave or a fool, Mr. Douglas has a more accessible public record, and we know he is no fool. It is perhaps only just, however, to concede him the point that he is the tool of an exploiting master class, to whose interest it is that confusion should exist in the minds of the workers.

It is not our mission, or of any propagandist value to debate "Spiritualism" as distinct from any other phase of religion. Socialism as a system of society means the end of supernatural beliefs. Our work has as its objective the overthrow of Capitalism, and we do not care to spend much time on its various side shows. We therefore are

not primarily interested in exposing the credulity of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or the senility of Sir Oliver Lodge. Mr. Joseph McCabe and others can do that quite well enough in their professional capacity. But where we are concerned with the question of Spiritualism is that Capitalism prolongs its lease of life while the minds of the working class are confused and side-tracked from the path of progress towards their emancipation.

That the phenomena supposed to have been experienced by Mr. Douglas at the "Black Séance" cannot be substantiated by any scientific fact is obvious to the logical mind, but that the working into a hysteria of nervous apprehension of a great proportion of the populace is a direct advantage to the Capitalist class in their business of keeping the working class submissive and enduring is obvious to the Socialist.

If a table can defy the law of gravity and float round the room of its own volition, well and good; scientists must alter their texts books accordingly. And if a spirit can sing "The long long trail" without a larynx, anatomists must also revise their opinions! But what we do discover about these séances is that no dead Socialist has come back to tell the readers of the Capitalist Press how they are exploited in the interests of the humbugging Capitalist class! And there must be many of our comrades wandering about the Astral Plane we think! Perhaps—horrible thought—the spirit of Capitalism reigns up there too, and has clapped our departed pals into ghostly jails so that they shan't blow the gaff on the fat men below!

But, maybe, we wax flippant. The situation has really no funny side. It calls for the same stern comment that the Armistice Day hypocrisy demands, and indeed, as do all the dodges that Capitalism uses to maintain its existence. The Cenotaphs and bunting, the ceremonies and sentimentalities, the *panem et circenses*, that seem to be more in evidence than ever before, all serve their turn, and the brutal rapacity of the Moloch we endure battens on the ignorance they signify.

Spiritualism will have its brief turn on the stage of history and make its exit, and something else will take its stead in the public mind and eye; but in the meantime the facts remain that Society here below is

rotten to the core, that a small section of it lives in luxurious idleness on the profits rung from the remainder, who, as a consequence, suffer the pangs of hunger, the diseases attendant on slum-dwelling and the agonies of poverty and insecurity of livelihood. Those are material facts that the working class should fix its mind upon. Directly the master class discover that flying tambourines and mystic ventriloquisms no longer absorb the attentions of an awakening proletariat they will command the spirits they have summoned to emulate the Arabs by "folding their tents and silently stealing away." It will be almost time then for the Capitalist class to do likewise. S.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

SATURDAY



DEC. 3, 1921

**"PEACE IN OUR TIME."**

Several years ago a Conference was called together in Holland to consider the important question of Peace. Representatives of the ruling class in various nations (the territory-stealing, maiming and murdering sections of society) gravely discussed the best means of abolishing war, or, with sardonic humour, how to make it more humane. Sonorous sounding resolutions were put forward but—not passed. Each representative declared that his nation was simply bursting to abolish war, and if only the other nations would at once disarm—to show their good faith—his nation would at once follow suit—or—er—nearly so.

For by some curious freak of Fate each nation had had some particular cause for retaining one or other items in their armaments which, for practical reasons, they could not give up.

The net result was that after passing a few minor and ineffective resolutions, the Conference dissolved. And the cause of their failure was simple. Despite the old adage about "Honour among thieves," this particular Conference of cut-throats found it was impossible for them to trust each other, and so the efforts to reach an agreement upon the reduction of their general costs of throat-cutting ended without result.

1914-18 gave a lurid example of their

brotherly love. It also showed how utterly ludicrous were the prophecies made by the various experts, French, English, and German, as to the length of time to which a vast war could be continued, and the absurd under-estimate of the quantities of munitions required to carry on such a war. The staggering loss of life and enormous destruction of wealth has shaken, to some extent, the complacency of the master class. The gigantic amounts the various sections of this class owe to each other—on paper, threatens arithmetical indigestion in their ledgers. So they are looking for a way out of their difficulties. A bright idea strikes one of these sections. "Let us call a Conference." Carried away by the startling originality of this suggestion, the others agree, and date and place of meeting are decided.

For this resurrected farce a new stage is found, and Washington displaces The Hague. One or two new turns are introduced and a fresh song is sung by a chief comedian, but otherwise the farce remains, in all essentials, as originally produced.

For several years a fierce debate has been waged among naval experts on the relative value of the big gunboat usually known as the "Dreadnought." Far from settling this problem, the naval activities of the war only intensified it. But while the "big" boat and "little" boat men are wrangling over their respective pet theories science has carried the question of armaments into new channels. The enormous development of the aeroplane and airship, along with the sudden introduction of poison gas, has given an almost entirely new aspect to the problems of war. The smartest agents of the master-class recognise this, and so the new comedian is ordered to appear and sing his latest song, entitled "Let us scrap our Dreadnoughts ere they grow too old."

America, practically self-sufficing and protected by great sea spaces, starts the song. England and Japan, to whom naval activity is still of large importance, join somewhat stutteringly in the chorus. Then while the audience rises and cheers in a frenzy of enthusiasm, the actors retire behind the curtain to discuss the serious business of the day—how to carry out their burglary of China and the rest of Asia without strangling each other in the division of the "swag."

Only a sunny optimist would imagine that burglary is going to be abolished by burglars.

Honesty may be the best policy, but they have found the second best very profitable up to the present. Modern wars are the results of the conflict of economic interests between various sections of the capitalist class. As these sections diminish in numbers, they increase in power, with the result that when conflicts do arise they are on a scale undreamt of before and with a slaughter roll staggering to contemplate.

Is there a solution?

Yes! But it will not be found at The Hague or Washington. It depends upon the understanding of the working class. When this class sees clearly that in peace or war they are but slaves to the master class, that this slavery is due to the masters' control of political power, and that this power is placed in the masters' hands by the workers, the end of Capitalism is at hand.

By organising to take control of this power the workers will be able to establish the social ownership of the means of life, and so abolish the division of economic interests that results in war, misery, and increasing insecurity of life.

Then a real Peace Conference will have been called.

**THE COMMUNIST PARTY.****"COMMUNISTS IN A HURRY."**

In the *Communist*, September 10th, 1921, F. Willis remarks on the passing of propaganda pamphlets like "Socialism and Bimetallism" and "Socialism and Old Age Pensions"; relics of a bygone age. Our present-day Communists need "sterner stuff"; they want something quickly. One wonders why those professing to be Socialists ever came to propagate solutions for the domestic difficulties which beset the Capitalists such as those mentioned above; but "J. B.," in the same issue of the *Communist*, evidently doesn't agree with Willis that the day for such things is no more. He has rediscovered an old friend, although it is dressed in a new garb, with Communist trimmings.

Discussing the problem of unemployment, he points out that while food and

clothing are abundant the unemployed are starving and freezing, and, not unnaturally, the sufferers demand sustenance. "The unemployed have a right to share in these; they have a right which the capitalist has not." "The righteous demand for relief must be fully met. That is the first and most urgent reply of the Communist to the evasion of the Capitalist. . . . All possible pressure must be brought to bear on Boards of Guardians and the Government to meet the demand."

Unfortunately, the Capitalist class have an irritating habit of ignoring demands, even "righteous" ones, demand the Communists ever so urgently.

The reply will be that foreign trade, on which as a nation we depend for food, in return requires low wages to permit low prices. "J. B." says this is a fallacy, but goes on to say "nevertheless, it is a business proposition that what we do produce should be produced as economically as possible, and to do that we must remove capitalism."

To remove capitalism would mean, one might suppose, to remove the need for competitive commerce; but evidently the goal to which the Communist Party hastens is not our goal at all, for this is what follows: "But we must still face the fact that, that advantage would not be permanent, as other countries are bound to follow in the same path." If that means anything it means that "J. B." envisages the possibility of the seizure of power here by an intelligent minority, before similar seizure in the rest of the world and the continuance of production for the world market in order to get food, until other countries see our superiority and do likewise.

That other capitalists would allow such even if it were likely to happen, is incredible, and "J. B." sees this, for he gives his remedy. "We are thrown back, then, to the need for developing agriculture, . . . and here is the central problem which emerges from the unemployment crisis. Food production must be organised to produce, not profits, but food." What land is cultivated "is treated merely as a tool to make landlords and farmers rich. . . . The financial interest of the farmer must go." Here incidentally arises a pretty little problem. Suppose farmers join the Communist Party to gain "relief from the unendurable burden of landlordism," as they are invited

to do (*see* Agrarian Thesis—Introduction), then to the extent that the Communist Party is successful they will have become richer than before, only to have their riches taken away; a mean kind of trick, to say the least of it. However, who could refrain from admiring such masters of tactics as the intellectual giants who conceived this?

"Communists then, while devoting every possible effort to compelling immediate and adequate maintenance for the unemployed, as a right and not charity, declare that the only way to end the menace of unemployment is the reorganisation of industry, removing private ownership, and working with the knowledge that the branch of industry which primarily needs developing and organising is agriculture." J.B.'s argument is that because the first and most urgent need of the unemployed is for food, that the reorganisation of food production is the solution of their problem. That agriculture has been backward under Capitalism no one would deny, but that backwardness can be and is rapidly being overcome by the Capitalists whose concern it is. The workers are poor because they are robbed, not because their employers in agriculture or elsewhere mismanage production. Under Socialism food would be produced where it could most economically be produced.

It is only the military necessities of capitalist states which induces them to become as nearly as possible self-supporting, and it is because capitalism has broken down national barriers and has made production social and world-wide that the workers' movement is international. The idea that each nation must aim at being self-supporting is reactionary in the extreme, for it encourages the false notion that the workers have an interest in promoting the national welfare.

Agriculture does not present a problem different in kind from the general social problem; it is merely a branch of industry and will be included in the transfer as a whole to common ownership. Those questions of technique and organisation with which the present owners are unable or unwilling to deal, cannot usefully be grappled with by the workers until after the revolution.

Some Communists are in a hurry—backwards! Back to the Land.

E.H.

## "AGRICULTURE AND THE COMMUNITY."

By J. F. DUNCAN.

Mr. Duncan is secretary of the Scottish Farm Servants' Union, but his knowledge of agriculture is by no means limited to the Trade Union aspect. He displays quite an extensive grasp of the organisation and technical development of agricultural production. What he lacks, and this is not merely a drawback, but makes the book a positive danger to the landworker who wants to understand his place in the workers' movement, is a conception of the working class point of view on social structure. Mr. Duncan is apparently unaware even that there can be a working class point of view. He speaks for "the Community," his object being to "discuss a policy by which the community will be able to make the industry contribute its proper share to the public welfare."

What is the Community? Mr. Duncan assumes that his readers know; but he is quite evidently at sea himself. Webster's dictionary says it is a body of people *having common interests*. Given, therefore, a group of people geographically associated, unless they have interests in common, community is a myth. Have the workers in general, or in agriculture, interests in common with the employers? Mr. Duncan admits they have not. He says (page 40) a policy based on such an idea "would be disastrous to the workers," and (introduction) "The interest of the community does not coincide with these sectional and class interests" (*i.e.*, of farmers and landowners). On every page are instances of the confusion which arises from Mr. Duncan's failure to realise the necessity of clear thinking.

In one place the community is the taxpayers who object to subsidising farmers, in another those who want cheap food, and again, the "nation" which wants protection from foreign enemies; and, as might be expected, Mr. Duncan's notion of the State is equally out of keeping with the facts. How can some central body represent impartially the conflicting elements which compose the nation? Actually it represents the dominant class against the subject class, and incidentally at any particular time as between divergent capitalist

interests it will represent that section which is in the ascendant.

Ownership of land may still carry with it social prestige, but it is no longer an important source of political power. Although a few years ago probably 2,500 people owned half the land of this country, the land owners are losing cohesion and political importance as a class, and the land is looked at with great and increasing longing by the industrial and financial capitalists as a means of lightening their own burden of taxation. Whether they tax it or get rent revenue by nationalising it, the result will be the same for them. Mr. Duncan thinks the tendency is in the direction of State ownership, but that is not of great importance. Besides revenue there is another vital question. It is that of cheap food. The industrial capitalist wants his workers' food prices to be low, not because he wants them to live well, but because he wants them to live cheaply; the reason being that their cost of living is the basic factor of their wages. Most of the workers, like Mr. Duncan, don't realise this, and therefore advocate Free Trade, the Liberal remedy for high prices. From about 1880 onwards there was a great slump in agriculture owing to the importation of cheap corn from such countries as America, where owing to the apparently unlimited supply of virgin soil expensive fertilising and rotation of crops were unnecessary. So long, however, as food was cheap agriculture at home could be neglected. Now however, those virgin soils are rapidly reaching exhaustion, and the same methods of cultivation have to be applied there as here. Prices have therefore, apart from abnormal war conditions, been steadily rising, with the result that since the early years of the century the capitalists have again been getting keenly interested in the agricultural industry. In brief, their idea was that by raising the whole level of agricultural production ultimately to the high standard of technique and efficiency of other branches of production, they could not only add to revenue, and thus decrease taxation, but also ensure a supply of cheap food, sufficient to check the world rise in prices. Mr. Duncan here sets out to show them how it can be done.

During the war when the submarine campaign was at its height, the Government

was really panic stricken, and offered guaranteed prices for wheat and oats to encourage production. They have now recovered from their fright and have decontrolled the industry, but their subsidies were not by any means thrown away. The guaranteed prices were accompanied by minimum rates of pay, and although the Agricultural Wages Boards have now been abolished the effect of them has been to induce vast and lasting improvements in methods of cultivation. High wages are always an inducement to the introduction of machinery, and Mr. Duncan remarks that organisation to raise wages has led to the introduction of labour-saving appliances. At present the production per head in agriculture is £90 per annum, as against £200 in some industries, and the result of the raising of productivity will be shown eventually in cheaper food, from which the industrialists will reap their harvest. This, however, is no concern of the workers, as Mr. Duncan would have us believe. To use an old but useful illustration, the price of food no more concerns them than does the price of fodder concern the horse. One would have thought that this lesson would have been brought home to Mr. Duncan from the Anti-corn Law agitation of the early part of last century. The workers were foolish enough to lend their weight to that agitation, but the manufacturers it was who benefited. It is most touching to recollect how generously the manufacturers offered the workers cheap bread—at the expense of the landowners—and how the latter offered them factory legislation—at the expense of the manufacturers; all, of course, for the benefit of the workers! Mr. Duncan so little appreciates this as to wonder why factory legislation was not applied to agriculture until some time later.

Having shown that landowners do not serve any useful function, seeing that they do not to any degree sink capital in improvements or equipment, nor do they supervise or organise, Mr. Duncan wants their dead weight removed so that production can be intensified, free from their incubus. Like the good capitalists who suffer from the exactions of landowners, Mr. Duncan thinks it immoral that the landlord class, which now performs no useful service in production, should continue to

receive a share of the spoil which another functionless class, the capitalists, have taken from the workers.

Outlining his case for State ownership of land and large scale farming, he usefully demonstrates the enormous economy in working and avoidance of overlapping that would be possible, but as is usual with advocates of nationalisation, he omits to show what benefits such developments can be to the workers, whose job is economised out of existence. "With more and better machinery the output could be as great from the 1,000 acre farm as from the five (200 acre farms) with fewer men employed." (Page 89.)

He assumes the continuance of production for sale in the competitive world market, and, of course, the continued exploitation of the workers, although he suggests safeguards against too low wages. He says the whole question is: Can we produce corn cheaper than it can be imported from abroad? Sir A. D. Hall is quoted to show how uneconomical is small-holding production as compared with the possibilities of the extended use of machinery on large farms, and it throws an interesting light on political stunts to learn that the demand for these holdings does not come in the main from land workers.

He is very severe on the middlemen, who, he says, "cheated the consumer," and shows how in Derby in October, 1919, the Co-operative Society, with 84 employees, men and women, distributed 17,000 gallons of milk per week, as against 224 retailers who handled only 15,000 gallons.

It is when Mr. Duncan deals with the policy to be adopted by the agricultural workers that he is most confused and confusing, a condition he shares with his English colleagues.

He admits that agricultural wages and prices have no direct relation (page 5), and instances the retailing of milk as a trade in which high prices and sweating prevailed side by side, and that "in good times as in bad they (the farmers) always fight stubbornly against any increase in wages. The workers need expect nothing from farmers except what they are able to force from them" (page 6). Yet, like Mr. R. B. Walker, of the National Union of Agricultural Workers, he assumes that relatively

high prices will guarantee high wages: "the price must be such as will secure to the producers a proper standard of living" (page 94). Again, quite inconsistently with the statement made above and contrary to general experience, he lays it down that "steady improvement in the productive power" is essential to "progressive improvement for the wage earners" (page 41), and yet confesses (page 109) that higher wages have not resulted from better farming.

One cannot but be amazed to read on page 110: "Given a more efficient and a larger scale industry . . . rural society would not be divided horizontally as it is to-day"; and wonders whether Mr. Duncan really does believe that the more highly developed industries are free from conflict between employer and employed.

Lest it should be thought that muddled thinking is peculiar to Mr. Duncan, it is as well to note that an utter disregard for accuracy and consistency is shared by most of those teachers of the land workers, who justify their opposition to Socialist propaganda on the ground that it is beyond the comprehension of their pupils at present.

If there were any justification that could be pleaded for leaders it would be that they actually do give a lead to their followers; but can those who have no considered policy themselves provide one for others?

Mr. R. B. Walker, secretary of the National Union of Agricultural Workers, quite correctly condemns "the vicious rubbish . . . that their prospects and conditions have not, and cannot have, any relation to those of urban workers" (*Labour Leader*, October 13th, 1921); while Mr. H. R. Lovell, assistant secretary, "wanted to make it clear that they were a purely land workers' union. They did not want to be mixed up in any shape or form with the Industrial Unions of the country" (*Wages Board Gazette*, December 11th, 1920). Incidentally, it is the boast of this Union, which is affiliated to the Trade Union Congress, that it is an industrial Union.

Mr. Lovell continued: "They were therefore running along with the Farmers' Union, so far as they could, to make agriculture one of the first industries of the country—an industry which would give to the people who had their capital invested

in it a fair return for their money and brains." This same Farmers' Union, within a month of the abolition of the Wages Board, had obtained more than 20 per cent. reduction of wages on the standard prevailing at the end of August.

Mr. Duncan, who sometimes does and sometimes doesn't want co-operation with the employers, refers to other people who do, as "well-meaning persons whose emotions are more easily stirred than their brains." (Page 40.) Mr. Lovell and Mr. Walker support the policy of giving subsidies to farmers; Mr. Duncan opposes. (Page 40.)

After the workers' minds have been confused by this sort of stuff, is it to be wondered that Socialist propaganda is difficult?

The outstanding defect of Mr. Duncan's book arises from his inability to see the outlines of capitalist social structure and the urgent necessity for a new organisation. He discusses what will be a problem of the new society (i.e., organising agricultural production) in relation to existing social conditions, which renders the discussion largely valueless. As conditions change so does the problem, and with it the solution of the problem. While the system remains and the capitalist class continue in power, industry can only be considered on a profit-making basis.

The present interest of the workers is to resist their exploitation to the full extent of their power, not to trouble about the technical problems which confront their exploiters.

P. J. L.

"The Bourgeoisie destroyed the feudal conditions of property; the proletariat will put an end to the bourgeois conditions of property. Between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, a struggle, an implacable war, a war to the knife, is as inevitable as was in its way, the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the privileged estates. *But every class war is a political war.* In order to do away with feudal society the bourgeoisie had to seize upon political power. In order to do away with capitalist society the proletariat must do the same. Its political task is therefore traced out for it beforehand by the force of events themselves, and not by any abstract consideration."

G. PLECHANOFF.

## ON ILLEGAL ORGANISATIONS.

In the July issue reasons were given for our opposition to the Communist Party. Among other things, the opinions were expressed that "it is impossible to organise the working class secretly," and that, with the possible exception of politically and economically backward countries, no necessity for illegal methods of propaganda exists, and no useful purpose is served by devoting energy to them.

America provides interesting confirmation of the inevitable failure of the illegal organisation. In that country a serious attempt was made to apply the Moscow policy, and it was in fact the boast of the American Communists that "the United States is the only country in the world where the Communist movement, as such, is an underground movement."

In the October *Liberator* (New York), Max Eastman, himself a supporter of the Third International, examines the present deplorable condition of the American Communist Party, and endeavours to explain it. His appreciation of the result of their work is this: "Two years have passed (since the secession from the Socialist Party), and except for the deepening and confirming of that split, nothing of appreciable value to the cause of Communism has been done by the Revolutionists. A good deal has been done to the detriment of the cause." This is all the more striking because the conditions considered favourable to Communist propaganda have been present to a degree perhaps never previously known. "In spite of an 'increasing misery' that surpasses the demands of any theory, the workers in America seem to be less friendly to Communism than they were two years ago."

The mistake lay in the acceptance of the fallacy that capitalism had broken down beyond hope of recovery, and the supposition that the form of activity dictated by the semi-feudal Russian autocracy must have application to the capitalist democracies. The first simply is not true, and the experience has again proved the falseness of the second.

There never was any necessity for propaganda to be illegal in America, any more than in this country. "It is not so much the ruthlessness of the American capitalists as the romanticism of the American Com-

munists which accounts for their being underground. The majority of the leaders want to be underground. They enjoy disciplining the devotees of a rebellion, but educating the workers for the revolution is a less interesting task, and they are not fulfilling it."

The Communists "formed an elaborate conspiratorial organisation excellently adapted to promote treasonable and seditious enterprises, although they have no such enterprises on foot"; yet when subjected to police persecution for their activities they, like the Communists over here, are forced into the position of using the ordinary legal machinery for their protection. "The folly of this policy becomes tragically apparent when members of this underground organisation defend themselves in Court with the eloquent and perfectly truthful assertion that the propaganda they are conducting is not in violation of the laws." It becomes still more tragically apparent when they resort to the distribution of circulars advocating methods of terrorism—for the mere purpose, so far as we can judge, of sustaining and justifying the illegality of their organisation." This degeneration into the futility of sabotage has always been the fate of those who have never been nearer to an appreciation of the class struggle than that of throwing broken bottles at policemen.

Their failure is that they will not recognise the realities of the present situation, and the attitude of the workers towards capitalist institutions.

The capitalist class is, and will remain, in power until such time as the class conscious organised workers are strong enough to wrest that power from them. That power depends on the support of the great mass of the workers, unthinking though that support may be. Capitalist domination will not be overthrown because some relatively weak organisation declares its preparedness to defy constitutionalism, and to damn the consequences. It is a question not of intention, but of effectiveness, and the object of the revolutionary organisation is to strengthen itself until it is a force which cannot be ignored or suppressed. This means neither more nor less than the spreading of the knowledge of Socialism—the unexciting task of making Socialists. The Bolsheviks came to power in Russia because, for the objects they had in view,

they had the mass of workers, peasants, and soldiers behind them. Those supporters were not Socialists, and those objects were not Socialism; but the position elsewhere with regard to the needs of the Socialist revolution is the same. The workers of America and Britain have not yet the requisite knowledge of, and sympathy with, Socialism; in short they do not want it.

The Communist Party therefore, in its insurrectionary attitude to the American Government, alienates those very people for whose ears its propaganda is intended. In the eyes of the average worker the Government which he elects represents his interests, as its proclamations do actually mirror his opinions. It is a fact, and not a surprising one, that the average unthinking worker believes that the existing machinery of Government does give expression to the will of the people. What, then, is he to think of those who deliberately set themselves against what appears to him as the forces of law and order?

It would not matter so much if the Communists bore the burden of their own mistakes; but the harm they do is much wider than that. They provide the Government with the excuse it desires for repressive legislation such as at ordinary times it would be difficult to introduce; and this legislation is used against every revolutionary propaganda body. They provide the openly capitalist political parties, and more particularly the reactionary "Labour" parties, with easy material for their attempts to discredit Socialism. They confuse, without educating, those workers who are reached by their propaganda, and antagonise the much larger number who hear only the misrepresentation to which it so readily lends itself.

It is a slow and difficult task to remove from the mind of the typical wage earner the pathetic belief in the inevitability of his sufferings, and in the permanency of political institutions and economic forms of society; but there is only one way, the educational way, and to think of challenging those who are now in control, before this educational work has been accomplished, is mere foolishness.

Knowledge of the evolution of human society, and of the origin and development of existing political institutions on the one hand, and knowledge of the present

economic structures which makes possible the exploitation of the workers, an exploitation not superficially observable, are the necessary forerunners of successful organisation for the emancipation of the workers. Spectacular defiance of the powers that be has no place in this scheme of things.

P. J. L.

"The entire development of human society from the position of savagery began from the day when the labour of a family resulted in the production of more than was necessary for its support, from the day when a part of the labour was no longer expended on mere means of living but was transformed into means of production. A surplus of labour product over and above the cost of the maintenance of labour, and the creation and increase of a social production and reserve fund out of this surplus was, and is, the foundation of all social, political and intellectual development. In history, up to the present time, this fund has been the property of a certain superior class which has, with its possession, also the political mastery and spiritual supremacy. The approaching social revolution will make this social production and reserve fund—that is, the entire mass of raw material, instruments of production, and means of life—for the first time really social property, in that it will put an end to its monopolisation by the superior class and make it the common possession of the entire society."

ENGELS.

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"But however necessary were the capitalist system and the conditions which produced it, they are no longer so. The functions of the capitalist class devolve ever more upon paid employees. The large majority of the capitalists have now nothing to do but consume what others produce. The capitalist to-day is as superfluous a human being as the feudal lord had become a hundred years ago."

K. KAUTSKY.

#### CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT.

Any sympathisers with the S.P.G.B. in or around Chesterfield are invited to get in touch with

M. CULLEN,  
10, Clarence Road,  
West Park,  
Chesterfield.

#### THE "CRUSADER" AGAIN.

In the August issue I dealt with what I considered to be the weakness and insufficiency of the policy of the "Crusader," in so far as it is concerned with the emancipation of the workers. In reply the Editor wrote (August 26th):

The writer, in his opening sentence, says that we believe in the power of the ethics of Christ to overcome all the difficulties and to combat all the evils which trouble mankind. That is just what we don't believe. The ethical system of Christianity by itself is a trunk without a head, a tree without a root. Christianity is based on attachment to a person of transcendent authority. When it is detached from this foundation, it loses all its distinctive characteristics, and becomes, what its adversaries declare it is, an impossible dream, a set of barren principles.

As a matter of fact, I am still of the opinion that my statement of the "Crusader's" attitude was a fair one, but evidently Stanley James thinks not. May I, however, quote from the "Crusader" itself (September 23rd) on this point, asking it to be noted that the Editor does not dissociate himself or the journal from the opinions of other writers in it? Mr. Wilfred Wellock, a regular contributor, writes, under the title "The Way Out," as follows:

Labour needs the lead of people who are prepared to take the straight road to the new world, to adopt a revolutionary programme based on the ethics of Christianity. And again: How magnificent it would be were Labour to stand four square on the principle of service and co-operation, and fight a General Election with such slogans as "The Meek shall inherit the earth. . . ."

Comment on this is not required.

Incidentally, to return to our opposition to the "Crusader" policy, I repeat, the militant and not the meek will inherit the earth.

H.

#### POPLAR TOWN HALL

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ON

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Tooting Broadway, Garrett-lane, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3.30 p.m.  
Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 7.30 p.m.

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**Tuesdays:**

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**Thursdays:**

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**Fridays:**

Tottenham, Junction Clyde-road and Phillip-lane, 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Wood Green, Jolly Butcher's-hill, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Undine-street, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.